EVERY BIG GAME FIRST! SPIDER-MAN 2 ✶ MANHUNT ✶ KILLZONE ✶ SMACKDOWN

computer and video games

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PRO EVO 3

OUR EXPERTS BUST OPEN EVERY NEW FEATURE

DEAD GOOD ANOTHER CVG FIRST!

ghost hunter

ALL THE PICS AND INFO ON THE KILLER SHOOTER THAT WILL POSSESS YOUR PS2 THIS CHRISTMAS

Yu-Gi-Oh! THE DUELISTS OF THE ROSES

WHY PS2'S WILD CARD IS THIS SUMMER'S BIG DEAL

KNOW WHAT GAMES TO BUY!

Soulcalibur II, Colin McRae 4
Conflict Desert Storm 2
Knight Of The Old Republic
Tiger Woods '04
Italian Job, Beyblade
And loads more reviewed inside

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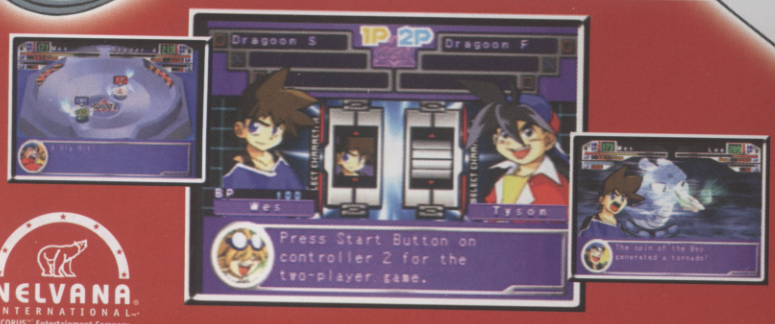

Released: 22nd August

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ATARI®

I AIN'T 'FRAID OF NO GHOST!

I can't read palms. I don't own a crystal ball. But I can read minds. I know, for example, that Jamie from Barnsley keeps getting hammered at Halo by his little brother. And Jay from Taunton, don't even *think* that let alone do it, you'll get arrested.

As for the rest of you, I foresee that you'll all be swamped by Ghosthunter, this month's wicked CVG cover game and Sony's big shooter for Christmas. Hang on, Christmas!? Sure, it's *ages* away, but that's just how good we are. We always bring you the biggest and best games before anyone else, and always tell you the biggest secrets before anyone else. Want to know why Prince Of Persia blows Tomb Raider away? See our massive behind-the-scenes scoop. Can't believe how Pro Evo 3 is better than the last game? It is, and we'll show you why on page 40.

As for here and now, get a load of Yu-Gi-Oh! The cartoon is massive but the game is gonna be bigger, and you can read all about the PS2 version in this issue. And to think you'd never heard about it when we first mentioned it back in August 2001. Hmmm, maybe we can predict the future...

Alex Simmons, Editor

ON THE COVER

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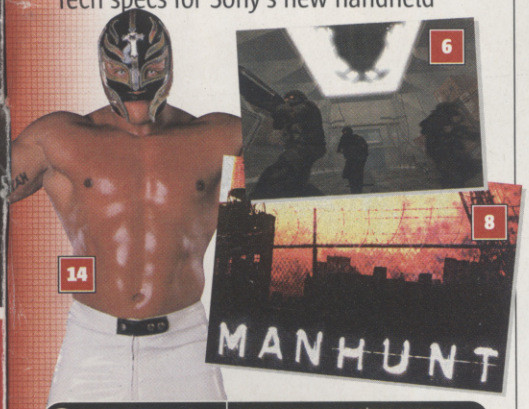

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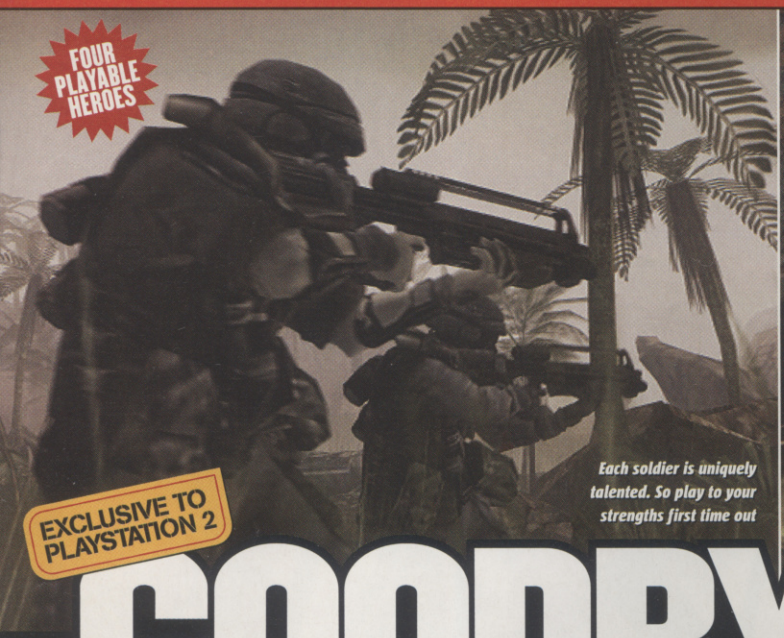
BELLAMY
BELLAMY

REEBOK STRIKEZONE. FOOTBALL'S FIRST HIDDEN LACE SYSTEM.

PLANET CVG

THE HOTTEST GAMES & GOSSIP FROM AROUND THE GLOBE



Each soldier is uniquely talented. So play to your strengths first time out

"Look into my eyes!" The Helghast commandos make the guards in MGS look about as menacing as ASDA security guards

EXCLUSIVE TO PLAYSTATION 2

GOODBYE HALO

HELLO KILLZONE! SONY REVEALS ITS ANSWER TO THE ULTIMATE CONSOLE SHOOTER

Inside sources at Sony are referring to Killzone as a 'Halo-beater'. Knocking Xbox's golden boy off the top slot isn't going to be easy. But if these phenomenal first screens are anything to go by, this PS2 exclusive is aiming to blast Halo's ass to Mars.

WORLD'S FIRST SHOTS AND FACTS!

At a glance it looks like Half-Life 2 crossed with Metal Gear Solid. Grittily apocalyptic settings mixed with menacing guards dressed head-to-toe in black combat gear. Choking with excitement yet? You should be, because this spectacular first-person shooter could be the best thing to ever to happen to PS2.

THE WORLD AT WAR

Set in the near future, Killzone's main campaign takes place on war-torn planet Earth. Those evil men with the glowing orange eyes that you can see in the screenshots are Helghast, evil terrorists intent on wiping out the human race.

You play as part of a four-man squad of elite soldiers faced with the task of eliminating the fearsome Helghast army. You can play as any of the specialist squad-members, but this isn't a SOCOM-style affair.

You don't command your other team-mates. Instead loads of effort has been put into getting the AI of

From depressing demolition sites to murky swamps, the killing fields in Killzone are as varied as they are spectacular

MEET THE TEAM

HERE'S THE TEAM THAT MAKE THE MAG GREAT

Alex Simmons
EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Advance Wars 2
- Winning Eleven 7
- Ninja Cop

Imagine you're a girl (apologies if you actually are), and look in your pants and discover you've suddenly acquired a boy's toy. That's how Alex is with his new iPod. He's always playing with it, even in the bog, and never hears a word anyone says. So everyone's cussed him up good this month.

Pete Walker
DEP EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- SWAT GST
- Star Wars: KOTOR
- Not Winning Eleven 7

Pete has been even less of a pretty sight than usual. Nothing to do with deadline or even the insane temperatures making his "knackers feel like a boil-in-the-bag dinner". No, we were too close to deadline for him to go on a trip to see Tribes 3. The look in his eyes can only be called Vengeance.

Georgie Kyriacou
PROD EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- The Sims Bustin Out
- The Great Escape
- Freedom Fighters

Suspicions were aroused when Georgie did a naked Greek dance across her desk during lunch (not that anyone noticed until after Winning Eleven finished). Finally CVG's subbing dominatrix confirmed she's off to do something worthwhile. That's right, make some real money in a proper job. Sob!

Lee Skittrell
REVIEWS EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Pokémon Ruby & Sapphire
- Pirates Of The Caribbean
- F-Zero GX

CVG's bronzed should-be-in-a-boy-band Games Editor has acquired a new nick-name: Lollipop. After touring studios in Montreal, he declared his favourite bit about this month's trip to Canada was the free lollipops dished out wherever he went. We always suspected he was a bit easy to please. Sucker!

THE NEW GAME FROM ROCKSTAR! IT'S SICK!

MANHUNT

DEATH BY PLASTIC BAG & SNUFF MOVIES!

LISTEN UP, IT'S FULLY ONLINE!

Sony is keeping quiet at present about Killzone's online multiplayer modes.

Nonetheless it doesn't take a genius to work out that the nature of the single-player campaign points towards squad-based battles online. However, an inside source revealed to CVG that, "Killzone will make full use of the SOCOM USB headset for online communication, but beyond that, the online side of things will be doing stuff no one's ever seen before."

There's a lot of mystery surrounding Killzone's multiplayer modes, but we do know that you'll be able to chat to your team-mates using the USB headset

your buddies spot on, so that although you work as a unit, you don't have to waste time telling them what to do. They will follow your lead but react instinctively to each scenario that hits them, allowing you to get on with the important stuff – like blasting the crap out of anything with a pulse.

You'll need to think tactically now and again, but Sony wants this to be a rock 'n' roll action fest, not a dull strategy shooter.

GET IN THE ZONE

Like Halo, Killzone's single-player adventure is enormous. There's a total of 26 giant areas to skirmish through, and from what we can tell the environments look even more interactive and immersive than its Xbox rival's. These first shots seem to show that objects will deform under an onslaught of gunfire.

However, there'll be more to Killzone than just running and gunning your way through gloomy burnt-out cityscapes. Expect to find yourself chest-high in ice-cold water as you stealthily wade though murky swamps while battling Helghast, using only tall reeds for cover.

When you engage in combat, awesome weapons and explosion effects distort your view. Heat hazes blur your vision, smoke drifts though the air, and massive muzzle flashes spit out the tip of a weapon, calling for controlled deadly bursts of fire. And we've heard from insiders that the sound effects are unlike anything you will have heard before.

Add to all this the fact that there will be full multiplayer online action (see box), and you'll begin to understand why Sony is so confident that Killzone will steal Halo's crown as king of the console shooters.

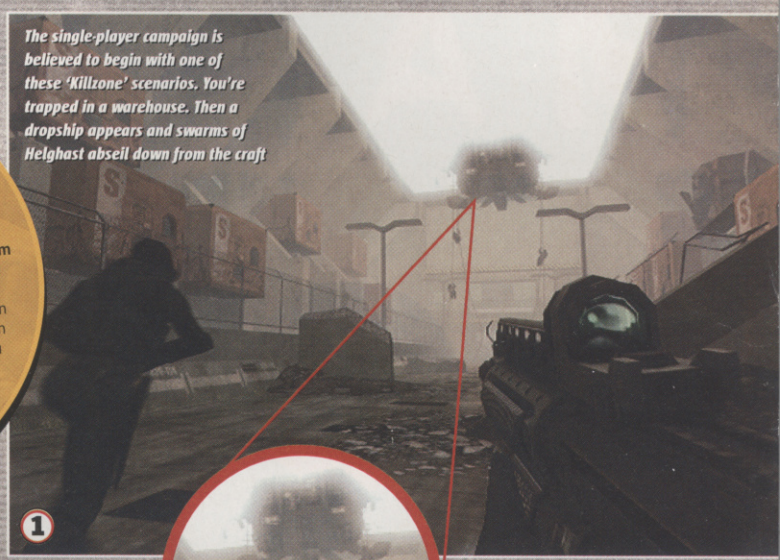
All signs are pointing towards an autumn 2004 release. Don't miss next month's Planet CVG for even more juicy news on the game that's got everybody talking.

CAUGHT IN THE KILLZONE

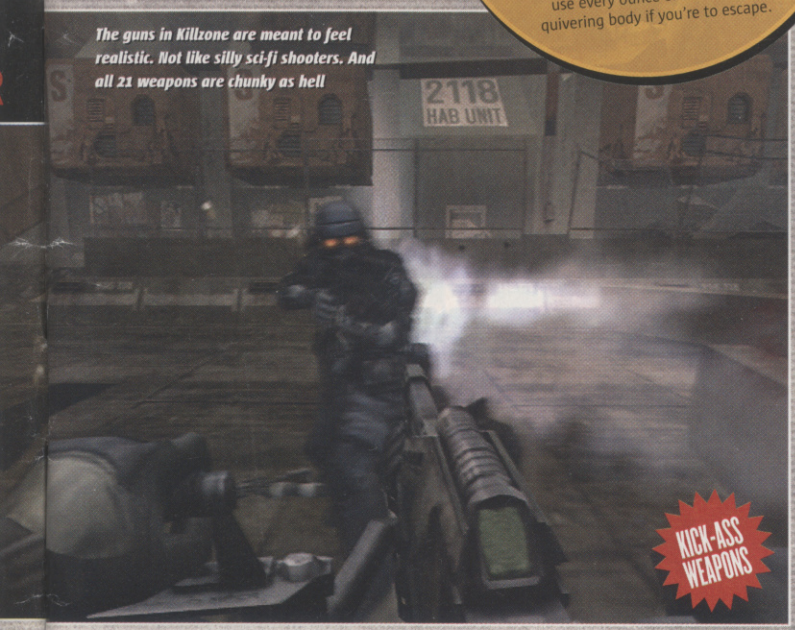
The name 'Killzone' is hardly subtle – it comes from the term used in modern-day warfare when one force ambushes and surrounds another.

There's nowhere to run and the idea has been incorporated into every stage of the game. But in Killzone *you're the one being cornered*, and you will regularly find yourself in hair-raising situations like this where you're forced to use every ounce of skill in your quivering body if you're to escape.

The main campaign promises to be every bit as big as Halo's. There are a total of 26 whopping stages, and they look like the bomb

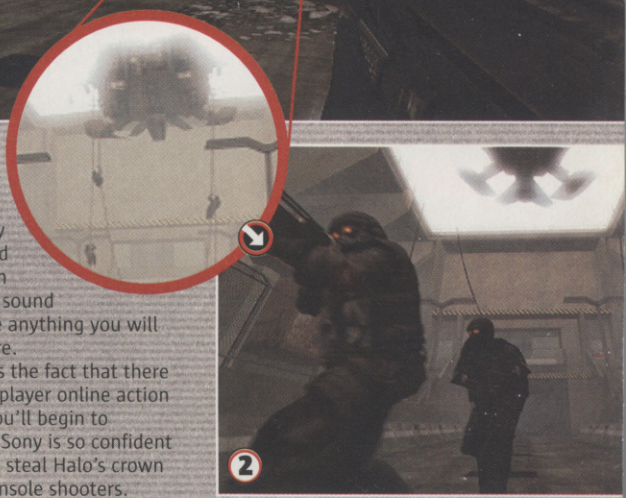


The single-player campaign is believed to begin with one of these 'Killzone' scenarios. You're trapped in a warehouse. Then a dropship appears and swarms of Helghast abseil down from the craft



The guns in Killzone are meant to feel realistic. Not like silly sci-fi shooters. And all 21 weapons are chunky as hell

KICK-ASS WEAPONS



The enemy rushes forward aggressively, running for cover and laying down suppressing fire. It's now up to you and your team-mates to make a brave stand and fight fiercely for your lives. It's totally crazy from the off!

Mike Cooper
NEWS EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Winning Eleven 7
- Viewtiful Joe
- F-Zero GX

Mike's finally moved out of his cardboard box abode into a real house, with a real roof over his head, and real mad London prices. He's even got broadband. Now he can't afford the train fare into work. Strangely enough, all month he's been banging on about the wonders of teleworking from home.

Graeme Boyd
STAFF WRITER
CURRENT FAVES
- Winning Eleven 7
- Tiger Woods 2004
- Otogi

CVG's newest staffer is still all starry eyed. The stinking Underground, abusive tramps and over-priced food are 'local ambience and culture', and he continues to cheerfully volunteer to stay that extra hour until 4am to clean Alex's desk after he's finished writing most of the mag.

Paul Davies
CONTRIBUTING ED
CURRENT FAVES
- Winning Eleven 7
- Star Wars: KOTOR
- F-Zero GX

All meaningful conversation with Paul ceased at the end of the last issue. Since then he's become so immersed in the world of Pokémon for CVG's special one-off magazine that he's forgotten how to speak English, babbling instead in nonsensical gibberish like "Rururi", and then only when he's not in the wild.

Jaime Smith
ART EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Winning Eleven 7
- Virtua Tennis 2
- Zelda: Wind Waker
- Mobile phone bowling

We've discovered that Jaime's like those kids in South Park with the bin-lid swing-top heads. If he opens his mouth wide enough, he can flip his head open into two perfect hemispheres with his teeth on top. Pretty useful when it came to opening bottles during the recent heatwave.

Jenny McComb
SENIOR DESIGNER
CURRENT FAVES
- Pokémon Ruby & Sapphire
- Colin McRae 4
- ZOE 2

Jenny's been a Jekyll and Hyde this month. Usually she's all mild-mannered and friendly...trying to translate Paul's Pokémon-ese into English, but put her behind the wheel in Colin McRae 4 and she's a foul-mouthed cheating fiend. Her offers of a lift home after work have been politely declined.

FIRST SHOCKING DETAILS

FROM THE MAKERS OF grand theft auto vice city

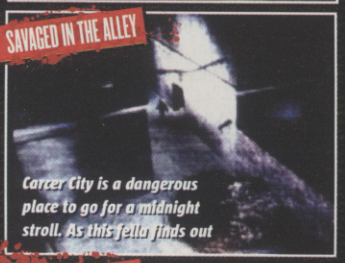
ROCKSTAR TAKES CRUELTY AND VIOLENCE TO NEW EXTREMES

MANHUNT

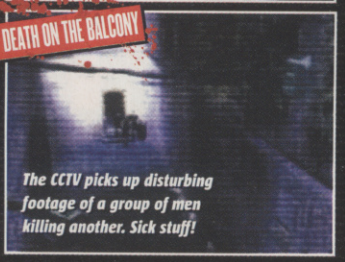
In its own inimitable style, Rockstar has launched a controversial teaser website of its new game, Manhunt. When it loads up a distorted voice starts blurting gibberish at you. Then suddenly you're whisked off to a dodgy site that offers you snuff movies made to order!

That's not all. There's a bunch of obscure CCTV movies on there too. Visit www.valiant-ent.tv to see them with your own eyes. The movies don't make sense unless you know what Manhunt is all about. Here's what we know.

Someone gets brutally beaten to death in the shadows of this toilet



Carcer City is a dangerous place to go for a midnight stroll. As this fella finds out



The CCTV picks up disturbing footage of a group of men killing another. Sick stuff!

LIFE AFTER DEATH

You've been a bad boy, and now it's time to pay. In Rockstar's chilling new epic you play James Earl Cash, a man sentenced to die.

A needle the size of a kebab skewer punctures your vein and the lethal injection is administered. You're dead. Or that's what you're supposed to think, because things are about to get a lot worse.

You're alive. Drugged not dead, and the star of your very own snuff movie.

If you thought decapitating grannies and torching innocent prostitutes was as bad as it gets, you're in for a shock. Manhunt makes Vice City seem about as sick as an episode of the Teletubbies.

KILLING FOR THE CAMERAS

You've been dumped in a hellhole called Carcer City, a killing zone controlled by a mystery man called the Director. Gangs of psychos known as Hunters have been employed by the Director to rip you limb from limb.

It's hunt or be hunted, and all the killings are caught on CCTV. Whenever you savage an enemy the camera switches to a grainy CCTV camera. The idea is that this footage can be sold to freaks all over the world with a fetish for seeing real grizzly murders.

SUFFOCATE SICKOS

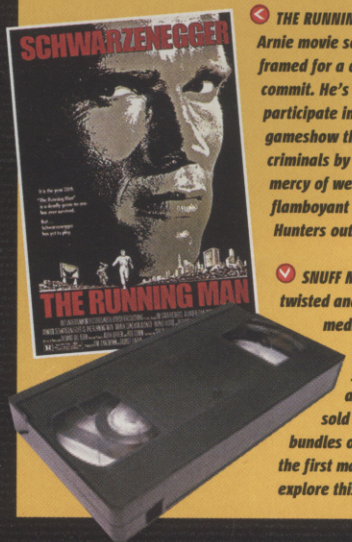
Your main goal is to stay alive. But this requires stealth, surprise and innovative brutality to keep the Hunters in check. And as sound plays such a major role in Manhunt, there'll be stacks of MGS-style sneaking action. Enemies can track you down if you're making too much noise. But it works both ways.

When the nightmare begins you're unarmed and need to find an object to protect yourself. The only thing you can find is a plastic bag! This calls for some creative thinking. You creep through the shadows up behind a Hunter, whip out your sack and swiftly pop it over his head. He twitches and convulses disturbingly, like a fish out of water, as you suck the life out of him.

There'll be stacks more makeshift weapons like the plastic bag, and heaps of sick killings to mastermind – if you can stomach it! We'll have loads more information on Manhunt soon, along with some of the most sinister shots imaginable.

UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Many of Manhunt's ideas appear to have stemmed from controversial movies and the world's current obsession with reality television. It would seem that for some, watching other people suffer pain and humiliation is just too good an experience to resist.



THE RUNNING MAN: *This classic Arnie movie sees the big man framed for a crime he didn't commit. He's then forced to participate in a futuristic gameshow that punishes criminals by putting them at the mercy of well-trained flamboyant killers. Just like the Hunters out for Cash's blood*

SNUFF MOVIE: *The most twisted and illegal form of media 'entertainment'. Real people are filmed being killed and the footage is sold to weirdos for bundles of cash. Manhunt is the first mainstream game to explore this taboo*

BIG BROTHER: *The last BB was the dullest, but millions of us still tuned in to watch Cameron pick his toenails. The real thrill is that cameras are EVERYWHERE and you can watch a contestant's every move. There's something sinister about watching folk 24/7, and Manhunt incorporates this attitude into its gameplay*

HOT NEW PICS OF SPIDEY'S ALL-NEW ADVENTURE ON PS2!

SPIDER-MAN
The webslinger returns. Flip over for all the first facts
VAMPIRES! SAGGY BOOBS! AND MORE!

CHART ATTACK

CVG MOST WANTED

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 3 (PS2)
Alex: "Player-specific animations and hyper-fluid gameplay will make this rule. Thierry Henry will be unstoppable!"

HALF-LIFE 2 (PC)
Mike: "Suck bits off buildings and fire them at 100-feet-tall mechanical bugs! This is the future and there's no turning back."

GRAN TURISMO 4 (PS2)
Graeme: "Over 500 shiny, expensive motors I'll never drive in real life on the open road. Heaven smells like petrol and burning rubber."

F-ZERO GX (GC)
Jaime: "It's a racing game that concentrates on speed and handling rather than car models or realism, and it looks awesome!"

BREATH OF FIRE: DRAGON QUARTER (PS2)
Lee: "I'm so excited that I'm replaying FFX, but colouring the screen with crayons to make it look like Capcom's cel-shaded stunna!"

READER'S MOST WANTED

Andrew Lambirth is our current work experience slave. We've given him a break from doing our dirty laundry and cutting Alex's toenails to tell us his five most wanted games

1. LORD OF THE RINGS: RETURN OF THE KING (PS2)
"Gandalf kickin' ass. Need I say more?"
2. ADVANCE WARS 2: BLACK HOLE RISING (GBA)
"Strategy gaming at its best... on handheld!"
3. STAR WARS ROGUE SQUADRON III: REBEL STRIKE (GC)
"An update on the greatest game ever. Cool."
4. MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH (GC) "The ability to race seven mates. Heaven!"
5. SOULCALIBUR II (PS2)
"A legend of a game returns, bigger and better."

Send CVG a photo of yourself and list of five games you're most excited about playing, plus 10 words on each telling us why.
READER'S MOST WANTED, CVG, DENNIS PUBLISHING, 30 CLEVELAND STREET, LONDON, W1T 4JD. EMAIL: MAILBAG.CVG@DENNIS.CO.UK (SUBJECT: READER'S MOST WANTED)

CVG'S TOP FIVE MONKEYS

1. DONKEY KONG (Donkey Kong) This barrel-tosser is the undisputed king of the swingers.

2. AIAI (Super Monkey Ball) Thinks he's a hamster. What a top banana of an ape!

3. MONKEY (TimeSplitters 2) He's got a mouth like one of those blow-up sex dolls (so we're told).

4. SPECTER (Ape Escape 2) He and his simian siblings are out on a mission for global domination.

5. OLLIE THE ORANG-UTAN We'd love to play a game with this wee fella taking the lead role.

MULTI-FORMAT TOP SELLERS

1	Pokémon Ruby	GBA
2	Pokémon Sapphire	GBA
3	EyeToy: Play	PS2
4	Tomb Raider: AOD	PS2, XB, PC, PS
5	FIFA 2003	PS2, XB, PC, PS, GC
6	Medal Of Honor: Frontline	PS2, XB, GC
7	LOTR: The Two Towers	PS2, XB, GC, GBA
8	James Bond 007: Nightfire	PS2, XB, GC, GBA
9	Enter The Matrix	PS2, XB, GC, PC
10	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	PS2, GC

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RELEASE DATES

PS2, XB	PRO BEACH SOCCER	AUG 29
GC	P.N.03	AUG 29
XB	NEXT GENERATION TENNIS	AUG 29
GC, PS2, XB	THE GREAT ESCAPE	AUG 29
PS2	INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB	AUG 29
PC	LIONHEART	AUG 29
PS2	RUN LIKE HELL	AUG 29
PC	SEVERN VALLEY RAILROAD	AUG 29
PC	SEARCH AND RESCUE 4	AUG 29
PS2	STUNTMAN PLATINUM	AUG 29
PC	AMERICAN CONQUEST	AUG 29
PC	AGE OF WONDERS: SHADOW MAGIC	AUG 29
GBA	DIGIMON BATTLE SPIRIT	AUG 29
XB	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN	AUG 29
PC	LASER SQUAD NEMESIS	AUG 29
PC	PRINCE OF QIN	AUG 29
PC	SILENT STORM	AUG 29
PC	THE TEMPLE OF ELEMENTAL EVIL	SEP 01
PC	GALAXY ANDROMEDA	SEP 01
PC	HANNIBAL	SEP 01
PC	PAIN KILLER	SEP 01
PC	UNREAL TOURNAMENT 2004	SEP 01
XB	ALTER ECHO	SEP 05
PC	REPUBLIC: THE REVOLUTION	SEP 05
PC	COLD ZERO: THE LAST STAND	SEP 05
PS2	DARK CHRONICLE	SEP 05
XB	GHOST RECON: ISLAND THUNDER	SEP 05
PS2	MERCEDES-BENZ WORLD RACING	SEP 05
PS2	RACING SIMULATION 3	SEP 05
PS2	CHAOS LEGION	SEP 05
PS2	REEL FISHING 3	SEP 05
PS2	RUGBY 2004	SEP 05
GBA, GC, PS2, XB	DISNEY'S EXTREME SKATE ADVENTURE	SEP 05
XB	OTOGI: MYTH OF DEMONS	SEP 05
GBA	MORTAL KOMBAT TOURNAMENT	SEP 05
PC	PATRICIAN 3	SEP 05
PC	BATTLEFIELD 1942: SECRET WEAPONS	SEP 05
PC	ENCLAVE	SEP 05
PC	CAPTAIN SCARLET: RETALIATION	SEP 05
GBA	ROAD RASH: JAILBREAK	SEP 08
GBA	GADGET RACERS	SEP 08
GC	FREESTYLE MX	SEP 12
PS2	ROBOCOP	SEP 19
XB	STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC	SEP 12
PC	UFO: AFTERMATH	SEP 12
GBA	POLLY POCKET	SEP 12
GC, PS2, XB	THE ITALIAN JOB	SEP 12
GC, PC, PS2, XB	MADDEN NFL 2004	SEP 12
XB	TETRIS ONLINE	SEP 12
PC	WILDLIFE PARK	SEP 12
PC	FIREPOWER	SEP 12
GBA	FREEKSTYLE	SEP 15
GC, PC, XB	FREEDOM FIGHTERS	SEP 19
XB	FREESTYLE MX	SEP 19
XB	HAVEN	SEP 19
PS2	SCRABBLE 2003	SEP 19
GC	BARBARIAN	SEP 19
GBA	GOLDEN SUN: THE LOST AGE	SEP 19
PC	AQUANOX 2: REVELATION	SEP 19
PS2	ULTIMATE SAGA	SEP 19
PS2, XB	XGRA	SEP 19
GBA	BUKKAZOOM	SEP 19
PC, PS2, XBOX	JUDGE DREDD: DREAD VS DEATH	SEP 19
PC	STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT: JEDI ACADEMY	SEP 19
XB	DINOTOPIA	SEP 19
GBA	BLACKTHORNE	SEP 19
PS2	SMASH CARS RACING	SEP 19
PC	TRON 2.0	SEP 19
PC	RUGBY 2004	SEP 19
PS2, XB	COLIN MCRAE RALLY 04	SEP 19
PC	CROWN OF THE NORTH	SEP 19
PS2	GALIDOR: DEFENDERS OF THE OUTER DIMENSION	SEP 19
PS2	NHL 2004	SEP 19
PC	YAGER	SEP 19
PS2	THE GETAWAY PLATINUM	SEP 19
GBA	SIMCITY 2000	SEP 19
PC	NAPOLEON	SEP 26
PC	ESCHELON 2: WIND WARRIORS	SEP 26
GBA, GC	STARSKY & HUTCH	SEP 26
GC, PS2, XB	SOULCALIBUR II	SEP 26
XB	WALLACE AND GROMIT	SEP 26
XB, PC	DRAGON'S LAIR 3D	SEP 26
GC, XB	MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER	SEP 26
XB	RUN LIKE HELL	SEP 26

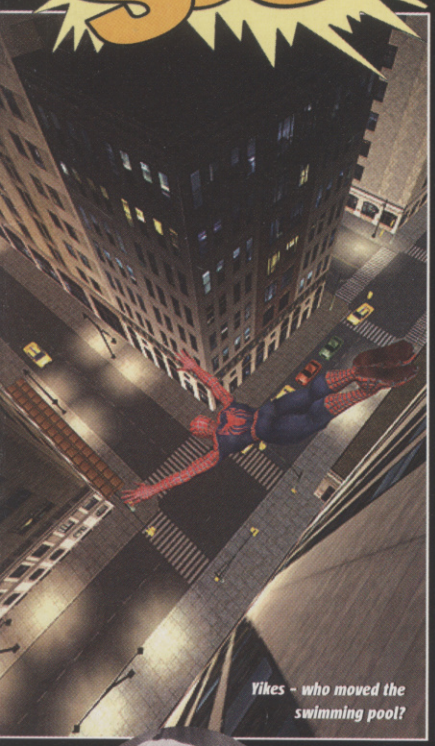
RELEASE DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

SOCK IT TO DOC OCK

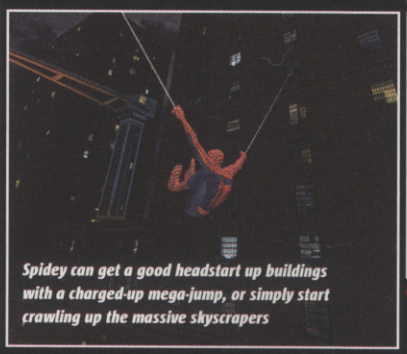
Spider-Man, Spider-Man, does whatever the movie can. And now we've snaffled a bunch of new screenshots for you from Treyarch's upcoming webbed offering.

Spider-Man 2 is only a working title (think Spider-Man: The Movie 2), but it's based on next year's film sequel and sees the original Mr Sticky trying to protect Manhattan, this time from the clutches of Marvel's steel-tentacled baddie, Doc Ock.

From what we've seen so far, the game structure is far more freeform, while the rooftop and street level action is seamlessly linked, giving an impressive sense of scale for the locations. Sit back and enjoy.



Yikes – who moved the swimming pool?



Spidey can get a good headstart up buildings with a charged-up mega-jump, or simply start crawling up the massive skyscrapers

Has anybody even noticed the crazy man in the sky with the giant flag?

Targeting multiple enemies at any one time with his sticky stuff is now also possible for the man with the web-slinging powers

Spidey twists and distorts his nattily clad body as he leaps from a beautifully moonlit skyscraper – it's just too pretty

ELEMENTARY, MY DEAR DINO-SAN

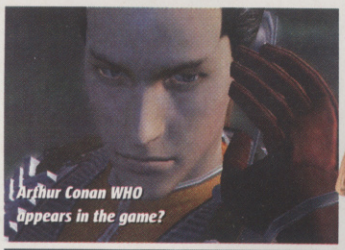
A videogame based on a dino-blasting book by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of the greatest detective ever, Sherlock Holmes? Out next month and you've never even heard of it? Dan dan-dan dan dan daaan. So began the strange tale of Holmes and The Missing Videogames.

Dinosaur Hunting: The Lost World is set around 1910 and sees you using dino-dung to track and tranq prehistoric behemoths on a time-defying plateau in the South American jungle. Given that the central character is clearly wearing an Xbox Live headset, we're guessing that they only stick loosely to the original Lost World book plot.

Only announced by Microsoft in July, it's out on September 18, but in Japan only – it's unlikely to ever make it to Europe. Apparently this has nowt to do with the fact that Xbox has exclusive Dino Crisis 3 out soon, nor that the Turok series' last effort made dino-mincing about as appealing as being a T-Rex's dentist.

Xbox may have sold poorly in Japan, but according to Microsoft that doesn't stop it from having a whole raft of titles that will never be released here because you lot won't buy them. We can understand it with games like Bistro Cupid, a girlie sim where you get a culinary prodigy to cook dinners (no, honestly), but Dino Hunting could have worked here, we reckon.

Right, that's another mystery sorted Watson. Fancy a game of Dino Crisis 3?



Arthur Conan WHO appears in the game?

Forget it, you barbarian

GAMES THAT GOT AWAY

Some more Japanese titles that us deprived Europeans won't see...

One of our dinosaurs is missing

Not enough girl gamers here in Europe

But are there enough perverts? Er...

When will we get a decent Holmes game?

Did someone call time out on the final countdown for Gordon?

HALF A SEC!

The most eagerly awaited PC shooter ever is officially due in the shops in almost exactly one month (September 30). Or is it?

Vivendi Universal has been busy quashing rumours that Valve-developed Half-Life 2 is a cert to slip, but US sources still maintain there's no way it'll be in the shops before November.

We desperately hope Vivendi's right, though after five years waiting, another couple of months won't matter that much.

WE ARE EXPERIENCED

Check your watch *right now*, readers. What day is it? If CVG has just gone on sale, there could still be time for you to taste firsthand what's set to be one of PS2's biggest upcoming online games, Resident Evil Outbreak.

The networked version of Outbreak will let you see just how much of a team player you really are in a city overrun by giblet-munching zombies. It's on show with 100 or so upcoming PS2 titles at PlayStation Experience, Earl's Court One in London, from August 28 to 31.

As CVG went to press there were still tickets available for the two daily sessions (only one on Sunday). It'll set you back £6 in advance (call 0870 444 5208 to check availability) or £8 on the door.

For the full games list, check out http://playstationexperience.com. Potter, Buffy and GhostHunter are all in the show...

OUT IN JAPAN ON SEPT 26
ANNOUNCE NEW HARDWARE AT NEXT E3

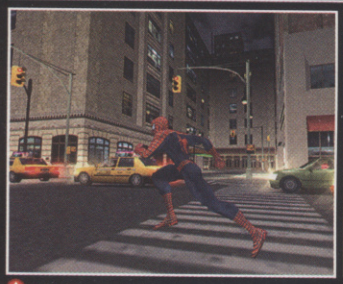
LIVE THE EXTREME LIFESTYLE AT HOME

MASTERFUL

Turn over for a feast of amazing new Halo 2 screenshots

WHERE'S LARA OFF TO THIS TIME?

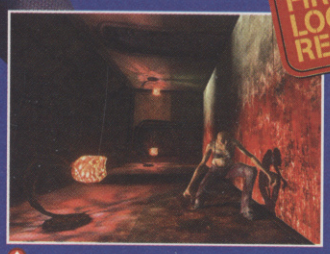
You'll need better skillz if you want your midair moves to be really flash



This time you're far freer to roam around the city as you want, picking up plot-critical missions or doing non-essential sub-missions

You should also feel far more in control of Spidey's web-slinging, potentially Olympic-beating acrobatics in the sequel

FIRST LOOK REPORT



A number of online team-based multiplayer combat modes are in the pipeline

Yikes! Those floppy fried egg boobs are probably her most attractive assets

VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE BLOODLINES

The level of facial expression is exceptional

This month Planet CVG was given the privilege of viewing a blood-curdling new RPG that uses the Half-life 2 game engine.

Vampire: The Masquerade Bloodlines is coming to PC this winter. Mixing gruesome first-person combat and exploration with in-depth RPG gameplay, this gorgeous gothic adventure has got everything going for it.

You can choose to play as a vamp from one of 12 different clans, each unique in style and ability. However, it's the amazing character models and facial animations that really make your interactions so believable. Often a raised eyebrow, or the realistic grimace on a character's face will tell you so much more than a throwaway line of dialogue.

It feels like everyone you encounter has a distinct personality, making the story, puzzles and action so much more engrossing than most other action RPGs.

Keep your eyes peeled for CVG's full hands-on in the near future.

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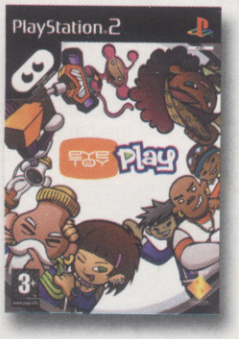

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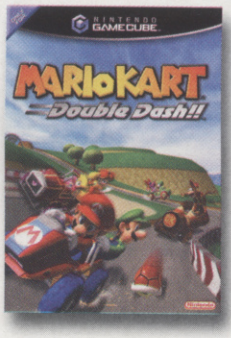

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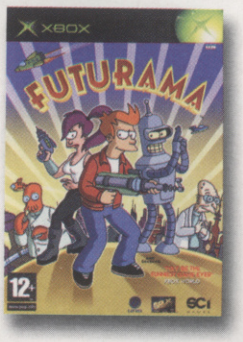

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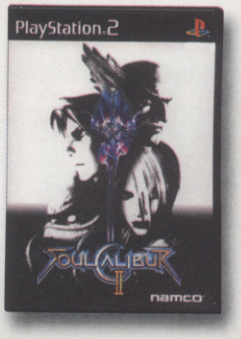

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The AI of your marine team-mates in Halo 2 is far more impressive

THE COVENANT ARE COMING!

BUT THEY'RE RUNNING A BIT LATE...

BAD NEWS: HALO 2 DELAYED. GOOD NEWS: IT COULD BE PERFECTION!

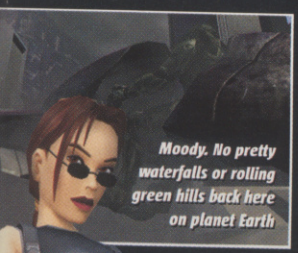
Sony has drawn a definitive line in the sand and is preparing to declare war against Halo 2 next year with its upcoming new giant-slayer, Killzone.

Bungie's mega-sequel is expected to ship in summer 2004, just a few months before its new arch nemesis bursts onto PS2. But like the Grolsch, Bungie only wants to serve it up when it's good and ready, thereby ensuring that Master Chief's second clash against the Covenant is as damned near perfect as possible.

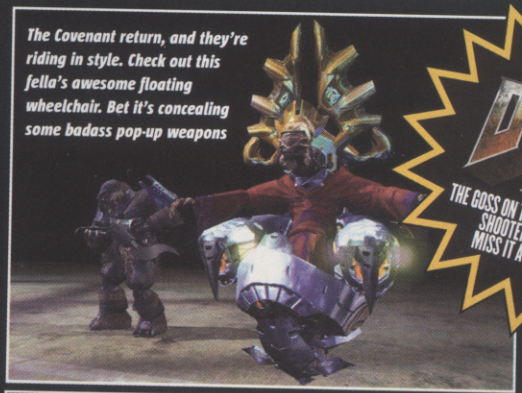
We've seen it up and running, and Halo 2 is indeed looking close to perfection. These screens aren't in-game shots, but we can assure you that the characters look every bit as crisp and polished in motion.

The world won't know what's hit it when these two titans come to blows next year. All we do know is that it's going to be historic, and there'll be winners on both sides.

We can't wait until Bungie reveals all of its Xbox Live-enabled multiplayer modes



Moody. No pretty waterfalls or rolling green hills back here on planet Earth



The Covenant return, and they're riding in style. Check out this fella's awesome floating wheelchair. Bet it's concealing some badass pop-up weapons

You'll be able to bomb around on quad bikes as well as in Warthogs

NEXT MONTH

DOOM III

THE GOSS ON THE MOST FRIGHTENING SHOOTER OF ALL TIME. MISS IT AT YOUR PERIL!

NEW TOMB RAIDER GAME

LARA'S MOVING HOME

Girls have a habit of turning up late. But nine months! That's bad.

Add to that the fact that Lara's latest adventure received less than impressive reviews across the globe and you have a problem. Not for the girl herself, of course, but for the team behind her PS2 debut.

This month Eidos announced that Core Design, the creators of The Angel Of Darkness, would not be making the next Tomb Raider game. Instead, it has given Crystal Dynamics control of Lara Croft's next console exploit, and has confirmed that this new adventure is expected to arrive some time in 2005.

You can look like a total wally too if you've got a spare 40 quid knocking around

BOARD STUPID

Broken limbs! Expensive kit! Avalanches! You need to be rich and more than a bit stupid to go snowboarding for real.

That's why CVG recommends the indoor pursuit of extreme living room sports. And with the Connect TV Snowboarder you don't even need a console!

The device plugs straight into your telly and lets you compete in the usual sorts of slope-side tomfoolery. The most harm that can come to you is a few carpet burns and the feeling of shame when your sister's friends catch you swaying on the stationary plastic plank in your Y-fronts. All this fun for only £39.99!

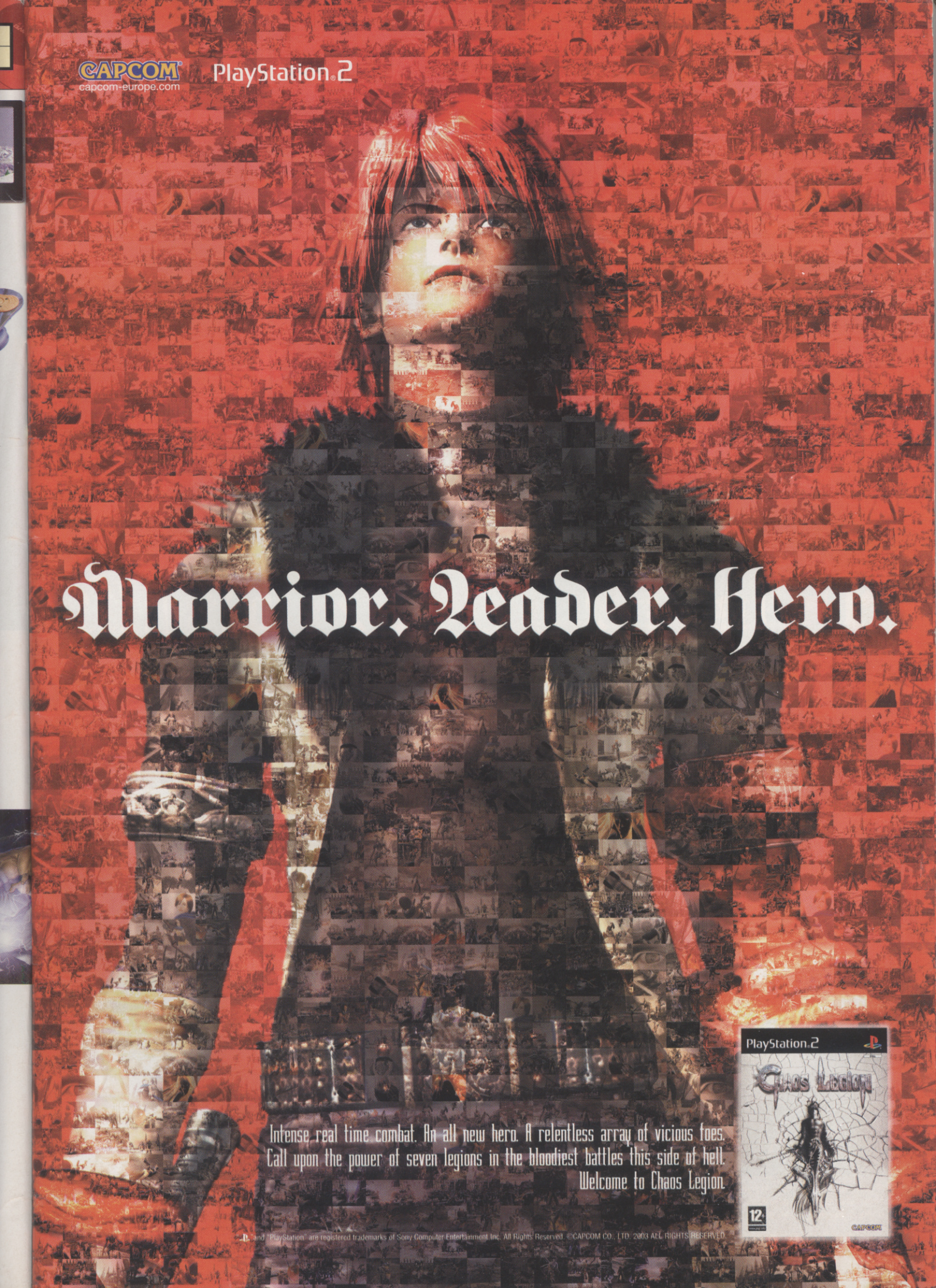
Don't lose yourself in the arcade just yet: SVC Chaos is coming to console!

CONSOLE CHAOS

The beat 'em up brotherhood is ablaze with anticipation for the upcoming release of SNK Vs Capcom: SVC Chaos in the arcades.

However, you might want to save chucking some of those pound coins in the arcade and pop 'em in a piggy bank instead, because it's coming to console too. You'll be able to buy an import copy of the game when the PS2 port goes on sale in Japan early in 2004. The Xbox title promises to follow soon after.

It's not confirmed if and when both versions will make it over here to Blighty, or whether the game will feature an online fighting option like in Capcom Vs SNK 2 does on Xbox. But we'll be sure to keep you up to date with all the latest in the run-up to the Japanese launch.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Intense real time combat. An all new hero. A relentless array of vicious foes.
Call upon the power of seven legions in the bloodiest battles this side of hell.
Welcome to Chaos Legion.
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Chaos Legion
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ANOTHER CVG EXCLUSIVE

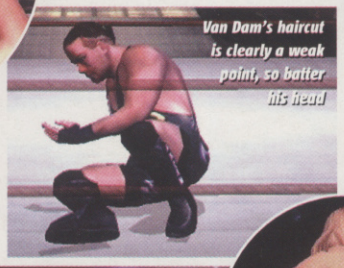
SMACKDOWN! HERE COMES THE PAIN

TAP OUT!

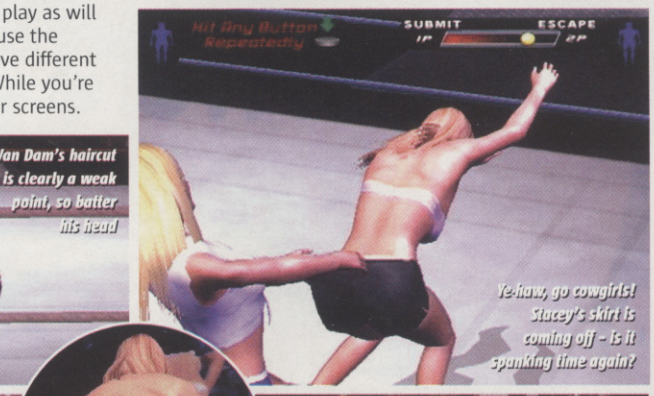
Go on, give in. There's no point looking anywhere else. CVG is *the* heavyweight hitter when it comes to exclusive new screenshots of the biggest and best games. Games like SmackDown! Here Comes The Pain.

New features in the fifth instalment include reworked grappling and countering systems, and more realistic moves that take into account weight – so Stacey Keibler won't be able to throw Big Show. Who you choose to play as will really matter because the superstars now have different unique abilities. While you're drooling, enjoy our screens.

You can't miss the restyled visuals, but you'll need to see HCTP in action to dig the new superstar voice-overs

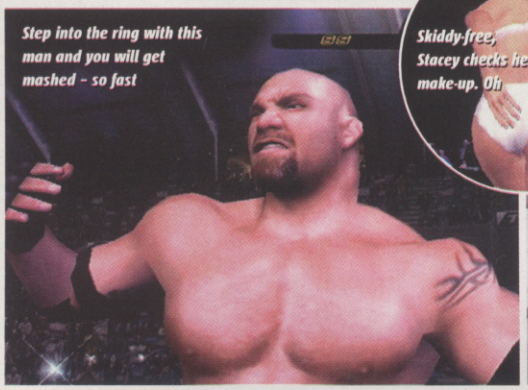


Van Dam's haircut is clearly a weak point, so batter his head

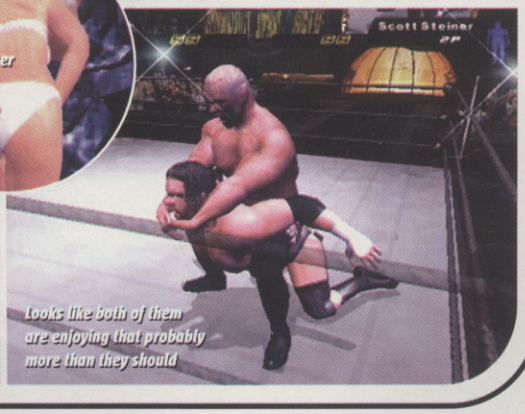


Ye-haw, go cowgirls! Stacey's skirt is coming off – is it spanking time again?

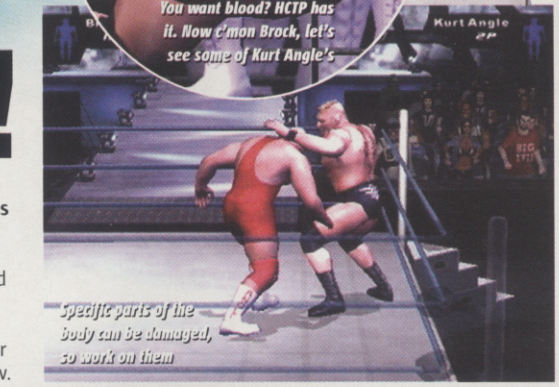
Skiddy-free, Stacey checks her make-up. Oh



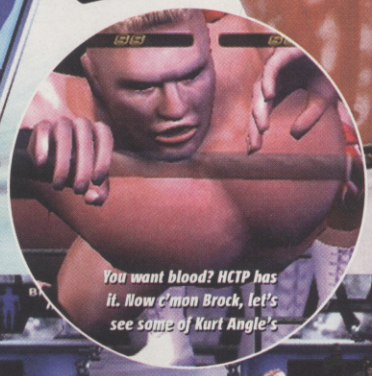
Step into the ring with this man and you will get mashed – so fast



Looks like both of them are enjoying that probably more than they should



Specific parts of the body can be damaged, so work on them



You want blood? HCTP has it. Now c'mon Brock, let's see some of Kurt Angle's

The eight-mission Jungle Storm campaign is playable in single- and multiplayer

Recognise an Island Thunder mission when you see one?

GHOST JUNGALISM

Share the wealth around is Ubi Soft's motto when it comes to Ghost Recon, with the PC original and now the Island Thunder standalone add-on coming exclusively to Xbox.

Except, in a surprise announcement, Ubi Soft has also unveiled Ghost Recon: Jungle Storm for PS2. It's out in November and is rammed with new content, including the Island Thunder campaign. Could this be why the Xbox release was suddenly brought forward to September 5, perchance?

TWIN SNAKEAGE

There's no escaping rubbishy merchandise

Someone's taking the Pliss. Snake Plissken, mullet-headed hardnut action hero from John Carpenter's 22-year-old movie Escape From New York, is finally set to get his own videogame.

Plissken, played by Kurt Russell in the 1981 original and 1996 LA sequel, shouldn't be confused with Plisken, Solid Snake's other identity in MGS2 – though it's obvious who Kojima is referring to. Russell will even be doing the voice acting for Namco's Snake Plissken Chronicles, out Christmas 2005.

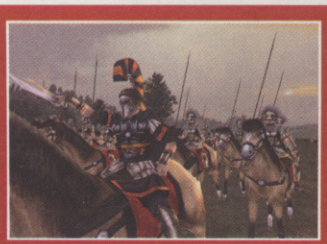
ON YER BIKE, YU

Virtua Fighter inventor Yu Suzuki has left AMD to head up a new studio as part of a shake-up at Sega.

Whatever Suzuki-san does next is worth watching out for

Suzuki-san, who helped make Shenmue, will now be concentrating on developing established hardcore brands like Virtua Fighter. On a longer-term basis he'll also be trying to come up with the 'next big thing'.

Meanwhile, disruption over at Vivendi, where some of the founders and creative masterminds of Blizzard have left to set up their own company. The developer, responsible for massive-selling WarCraft, Diablo and StarCraft, is one of Vivendi's crown jewels.



Re-enact famous battles, or fight historical campaigns like the Punic Wars, taking on Hannibal and his War Elephants

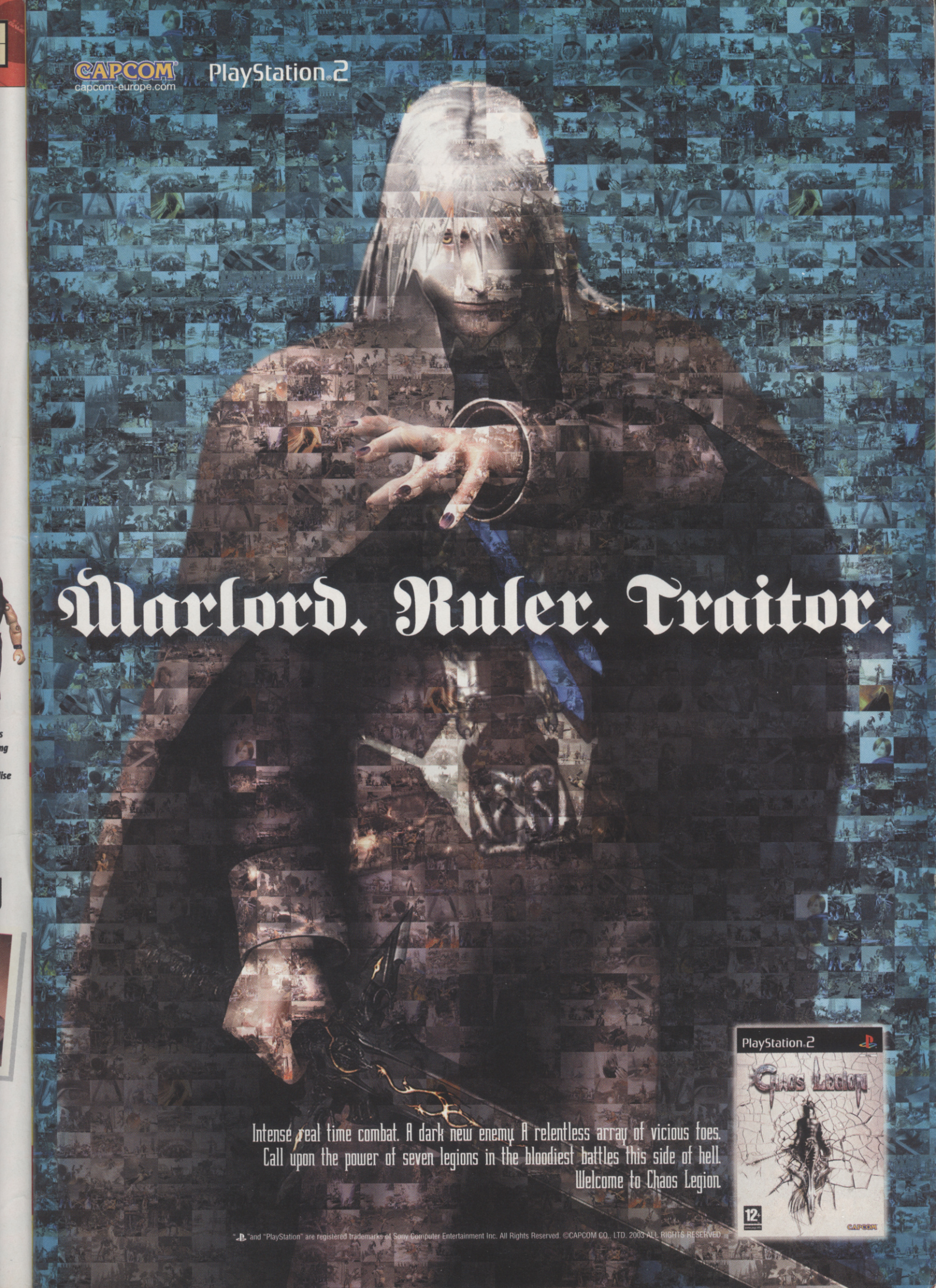
ROME: TOTALLY W-AWESOME

A few years back, just as we were about to sue the makers of all those isometric pixel-high-soldier strategy games for ruining our eyesight, the genre went all 3D on us.

Now Total War series developer Creative Assembly has pushed the boundaries again, with a new engine that looks so fantastic it's a crime not to spend hours ogling every screenshot.

We could bang on about how the latest instalment takes tactical and strategic decision-making to a new level, or the 125 different units ranging from Roman Legionaries and Egyptian Charioteers to berserker Germans and Incendiary Pigs (yes, they *are* historically accurate).

But instead we'll just say this: you can have 10,000 highly detailed, motion-captured units fighting in the same battle. Look at our screenshots, look at any individual unit, admire the beautiful armour or the cantering horse, then multiply that by 10,000. There's only one word for it – wow!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Warlord. Ruler. Traitor.
Intense real time combat. A dark new enemy. A relentless array of vicious foes.
Call upon the power of seven legions in the bloodiest battles this side of hell.
Welcome to Chaos Legion.
PlayStation.2
Chaos Legion
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HOTTEST GAMING NEWS

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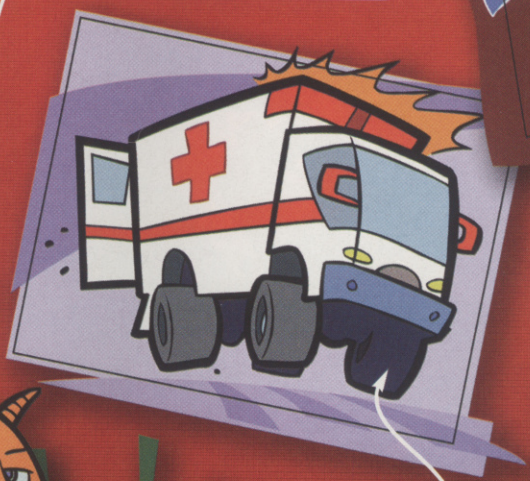

IT'S GOOD TO TALK

There's no better place on the Web to meet like-minded people than on our forums. Feel the need to spout on about your passion? We have bulletin boards for PS2, Xbox, GameCube, Game Boy Advance, PC, Mac, PSone, Dreamcast, N64, music and film, cheats, our online ranking service CSports.net and a general place to talk games. Join the party right now! .

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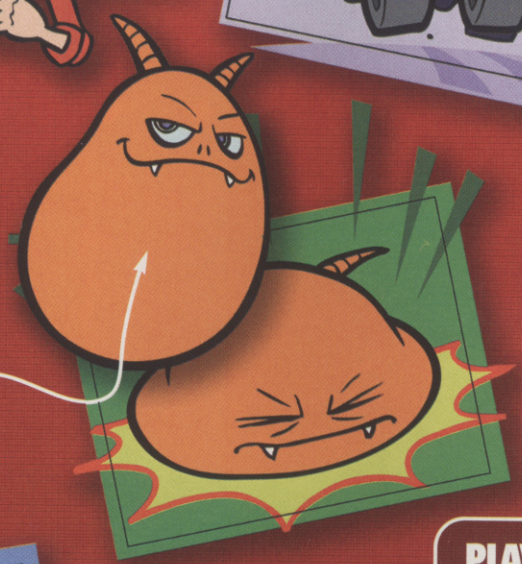
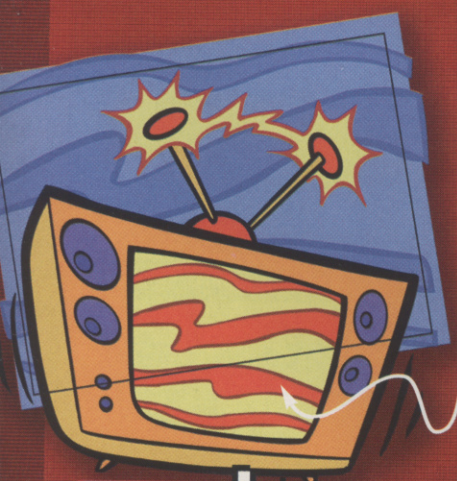


ESSENTIAL TIPS FROM THE EXPERTS

CheatStation is one of the biggest sources of gaming tips, cheats and guides on the Internet, supplying 37,558 cheats for 8877 games on 40 formats. Features such as being able to vote on any cheat make ComputerAndVideogames.com's service the best in the world. There's absolutely no need to go anywhere else.



KILLER COMPETITIONS

Fact: the best online competition prizes around are to be found on ComputerAndVideogames.com. Consoles, games, TVs and everything else you could ever need to make your gaming life a luxury fly out of our hands faster than you can say, "I need free stuff". Don't be a mug: you've got to be in it to win it.

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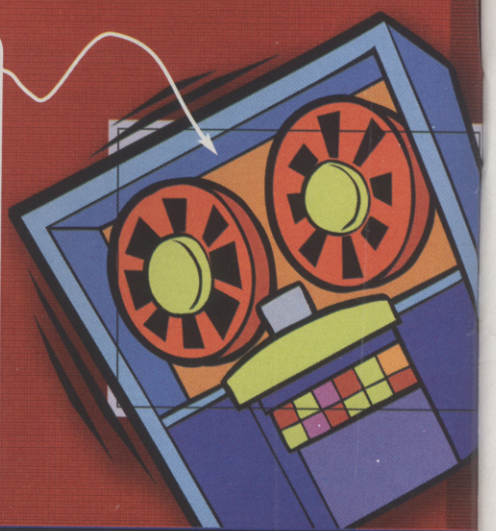

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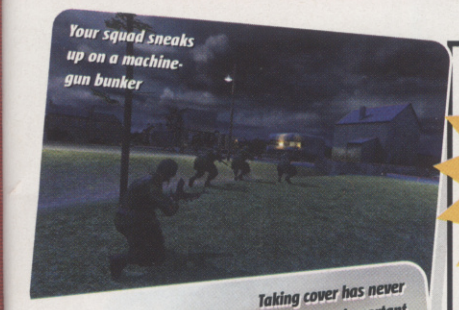
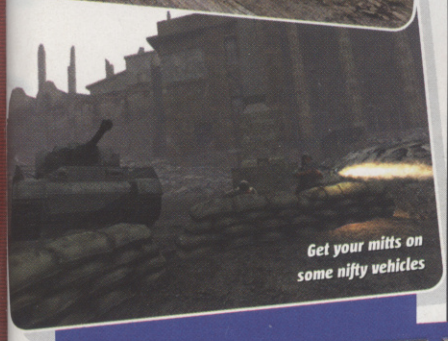

Your squad sneaks up on a machine-gun bunker

Taking cover has never been more important

The battlegrounds are stunning


Get your mitts on some nifty vehicles

CALL OF DUTY

What the world needs now is war, sweet war... Call Of Duty is ready to bring the horror of conflict to PC this October, and to the big three soon after.

It's developed by some of the team that worked on Medal Of Honor: Allied Assault, so we can be sure the game will be a well-conceived killing machine.

Call Of Duty takes you on a first-person journey through the Second World War. You start as an American paratrooper and end up as a Russian battling for Stalingrad. Whatever your identity, the emphasis is on the camaraderie forged in the furnace of battle. Your tactics, rather than pre-scripted routines, decide who lives and who gets sent home in a pine box. Sophisticated AI is promised, with friends and foes alike reacting intelligently.

The battles are recreations of real conflicts and the environmental detail looks stunning. War has never looked so convincing – when you're just one member of a squad attacking a fortified position and your mates are getting blown to kingdom come all around you, you get a sense of how terrifying the real thing must be. Call Of Duty could be the next evolution of videogame warfare.

HOT NEW INFO ON THE PSP FROM SONY

Good things come in small packages: is this what the PSP could look like?

SONY HANDS OUT HANDHELD SPECS

Sony has released some mouth-watering details about its new handheld. We were expecting a shrunk-down PlayStation One, but the stats that Sony boffins are now bandying about are actually closer to PS2!

The PSP will be powered by two 32-bit processors. Basically, it's going to be 10 times faster than the PSone and its clock speed of 333MHz is actually *faster* than the PS2! But don't throw away your black box yet – the 128-bit processor of the PS2 means it can handle much more information. Still, PSP is going to run faster than a cheetah on a treadmill.

On top of that, you'll be able to play your near-PS2-quality PSP games on a huge 4.5-inch widescreen display! With all the graphics technology inside and such a huge screen, PSP games are going to look awesome. Imagine portable Gran Turismo, looking just as fine as it does on the PS2, or a huge Grand Theft Auto City right in the palm of your hand!

You won't have to sacrifice control, either. The PSP will have a directional pad, an analog stick, the cross, circle, triangle and square buttons, L1 and R1 buttons, and the start and select buttons. Including the Dpad – that's a potential total of 10 action buttons compared to the GBA's four.

So how long are you going to have to wait to get your sweaty paws on Sony's baby? Well, the release date has been pencilled in for the last quarter of 2004 so you should get it on next year's Christmas list now. Sony has promised a prototype launch at next year's E3, so hopefully we'll have a full playtest pretty soon.

GAME BOY GIGANTICUS!

Just as our palms are getting sweaty for Sony's PSP, murmurs have started to circulate about Nintendo's next project, rumoured to be announced next year.

Will this be a new Game Boy set to rival the PSP? Given that GameCube's having trouble finding loving homes, our money's on Nintendo trying to retain its hold of the portable market. We'll be first to find out, so watch this space.

The Movies

We'd all love to make movies, but it seems like a lot of work and playing games is just so much *fun*. Hold on, though, because genius, visionary and all-round legend Peter Molyneux's new project lets us do both at the same time!

As incredibly original as it is ambitious, The Movies sees you starting a film production company in 1900 and attempting to make some huge box office receipts. It'll first appear on PC, with PS2, Xbox and GC versions to follow.

You'll be in charge of every last decision, like choosing the type of script you want, the actors involved, the set and props, and the tone of your films. Keeping your audience in mind will be important – for instance, a good bit of nookie will fill seats these days, but folk in 1930 were much more straitlaced and will boycott your flick.

It's a blockbuster idea. You'll even be able to distribute the movies you make on the web and hopefully make a name for yourself in Tinseltown. Cooler still, Peter Molyneux exclusively revealed to us that branded expansion packs are a possibility, so you might even be able to buy a Lord Of The Rings pack with all the sets, characters and plotlines of the movies.

We're so excited we've already booked seats for the premiere next year.

The quality of your buildings will affect your creative output

YU-GI-OH! WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP 2003

GET READY TO D-D-D-DUEL!

- **PLACE:** Madison Square Garden, New York
- **DATE:** 10 August 2003
- **PRIZE:** Millennium Puzzle Trophy and ultimate respect

The first Yu-Gi-Oh! World Championship attracted finalists from across the globe and over 6000 fans to New York's Madison Square Garden. Duelling took place in two separate tournaments to find the TCG and Videogame champ.

Fans were also able to duel other players, trade cards, pick up tips from the experts and buy rare cards from dealers.

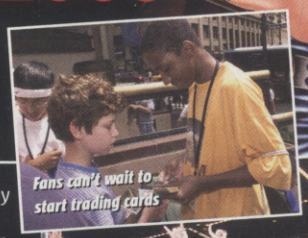
Two separate halls were packed with the latest Yu-Gi-Oh! videogames and thousands of card duelists waiting for battle.

Competitions held on the day even allowed attendees to battle finalists from the main tournament and collect handfuls of prizes if they won.

Of course, the main attraction was the championship itself, which ran throughout the day until the Kings were crowned late in the afternoon. We paid close attention to the two UK finalists, Michael Ryback and Christopher Kirkham. Both were ecstatic to be in New York and representing their country but they weren't interested in sightseeing, being more concerned with meeting other Yu-Gi-Oh! Fans. After all, one of the main attractions of the game is the opportunity to make new friends. UK TCG champ Michael told us that although he managed to tour Manhattan by ferry, by the end of the boat trip he was duelling the German finalist on the deck!

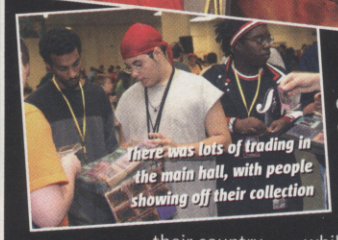
Despite the best efforts of our UK champs, by the end of the day it was the French GBA player Francois Ferry who took the videogame crown, while Ng Yu Leung of Hong Kong beat Shigeki Kitamura of Japan became the King of TCG Games. Both were besieged by autograph hunters! Remember, keep playing and it could be you they cheer next year.

And finally, the most popular cards in the compo? TCG winner Yu Leung favoured Fibrejar, while Jinzo drew gasps from the audience every time it appeared.


Fans can't wait to start trading cards

Pick me! By answering a trivia question fans were rewarded with booster packs

The champion signs autographs for the mob of fans


There was lots of trading in the main hall, with people showing off their collection

GBA CHAMPIONSHIP

UK GBA Champ Christopher Kirkham takes on challengers

The competition was fierce as players of Yu-Gi-Oh! Worldwide Edition went head to head in New York.

Although our UK Champ Christopher Kirkham had cut short a holiday in Orlando to attend the finals, he was knocked out in the first round in a very close duel against eventual winner of the tournament, Francois Ferry of France. Christopher remained positive about his defeat: "It was quite close at the end and down to the last turn of the card. Still, I'm glad I came and I hope to play some other people here today before I go home." True to his word, we spotted Christopher in the gaming halls throughout the afternoon, battling fellow fans.

TCG CHAMPIONSHIP

UK TCG Champ Michael Ryback starts another duel

With entrants from Belgium, Japan, Malaysia, France, Canada, Singapore, Hong Kong, America and the UK, the TCG championship was a truly international affair.

UK Champ Michael Ryback battled bravely throughout the day before being defeated by the runner-up of the tournament in the Quarter Final.

Fifteen-year-old Michael, the youngest finalist, had to massively revise his deck to be competitive against the Japanese and US players who have access to the latest cards. When the tournament was over he told us: "I'm very happy, I'm either the fifth, sixth, seventh or eighth best player in the world." Not bad for someone who's been playing for less than a year!

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STICK IT TO 'EM

Let's be honest. Nobody knows games better than you CVG readers. You buy them, you play them, you love them.

And that's why we're supporting the Golden Joystick Awards, because they let *you* vote for your favourite games of the year and tell the industry what you're most excited about. Go to www.goldenjoystick.co.uk to make your voice heard or turn to page 63.

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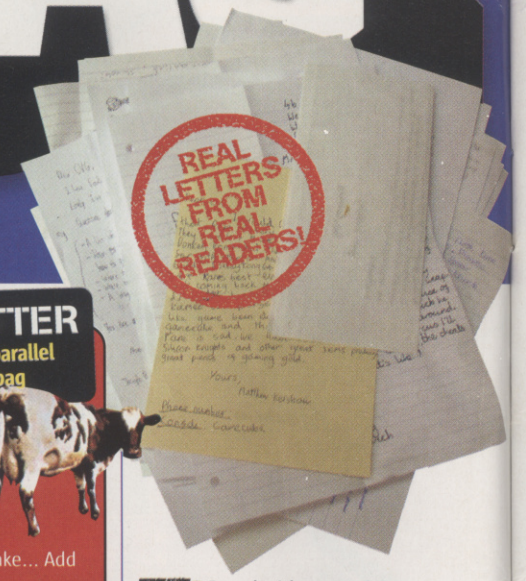


POKÉ-GURL

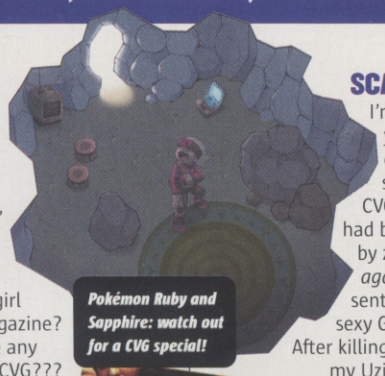
I was wondering if you could please do a walkthrough for Pokémon Ruby and Sapphire. Also, what date is The Sims Bustin' Out coming out?

P.S. Am I the only girl who reads this magazine? And also, are there any female workers at CVG??? Also, this magazine rules.

Sarah, via email

CVG *Also, we've been working on something very special to help you guys train your Pokémon in Ruby and Sapphire to the max. , CVG's special Pokémon Trainer's Kit is now on sale in all good newsagents, supermarkets and pencil shops (okay, not pencil shops), and it's packed with everything you need to know about all the Pokémon in the two games – see page 79.*

Also, the following two letters should answer your questions about the laydeez...



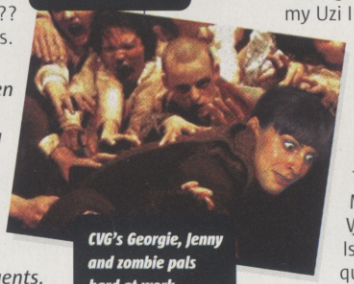
Pokémon Ruby and Sapphire: watch out for a CVG special!

SCARY S**T

I'm going to tell you about a dream I had. It starts off in the CVG office which had been taken over by zombies *[What, again?]* and I was sent there to rescue sexy Georgie Kyriacou. After killing 20 zombies with my Uzi I ran out of bullets. I had to get past the only zombie left, Jenny McComb. Thinking back to Matthew Waite's letter in Issue 258, I quickly grabbed an Xbox and walloped her. It worked, she went down and I got Georgie under the desk and was about to have a massive kiss when Jenny, who was only knocked out, bit my head off and ate Georgie.

Michael, Stoke

CVG *Ridiculous – you'd have to save Georgie at least twice to get her under the desk. Still, at least it proves that polishing the family jewels too much really does send you mad.*



CVG's Georgie, Jenny and zombie pals hard at work

GUEST LETTER

Another entry from a parallel universe to CVG's Mailbag

MILKY TEET

I want some Crusha, a glass of Crusha, it's tough enough to make milkshake... Add milk or we'll Crusha!!!!!

Da Cat, via email

CVG *Shut. Up.*

CVG *Bored with games? Sorry, we simply don't understand.*

ME NEITHER

I need some advice from you. I've been playing games since the Spectrum and lately I find myself more and more bored with games. Shall I stop gaming or return to some of the classics on the Mega Drive and PlayStation?

Spider

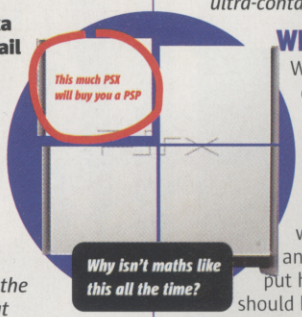
CVG *What is this? Some kind of ultra-contagious virus?*

DON'T BE PSX²

In issue 262 you showed the PSX. Can you give an educated estimate as to how much it will cost?

Jenny aka 'FREAK' aka you, yes you, via email

CVG *Pay attention, class. If a regular recordable DVD machine costs little Jimmy around $1000 in the US, and Sony massively undercuts this and launches PSX in Europe for £300-400 plus the PSP for much the same price as a GBA, at current $/£ exchange rates, how many PSPs could Jimmy buy in the UK if he cancelled his order for a standard American DVD recorder?*



Why isn't maths like this all the time?

WIGGING OUT

What the hell has Paul done to his hair?

I'm a hardcore mosher and I have long hair. If anybody shaved or made me shave my head I would shoot them and then cry. If anyone put him up to it they should be sacked.

I've got a GameCube and most of the main Nintendo characters have long hair. Just imagine if Mario was bald or Link looked like G.I. Joe. It's just wrong.

So please Paul *don't* get your hair cut again. Let it grow back into its former glory.

Cian, Ireland

What haircut should CVG's Paul grow next? You vote

POKÉMON CORRUPTION

I bought Sapphire over the Internet and I want to know if I'll be able to link up with mates if they've got the UK version.

Cally, via email

CVG *You'll be fine if you have an English language import, but if you try to trade with a Japanese language version it'll corrupt your data, which is as painful as it sounds.*

CAN'T BE ARSED

I've been finding myself bored with all games. I enjoy reading your mag but I just can't be bothered to play them anymore.

Jimmy Jimmy Joe Joe Jnr, via email

CVG STINKER

THE VAMPIRE SAYER

In Issue 262 you mentioned there would be more info on Buffy the game in the next issue. I hope you know that the voice in the game is not really Buffy's voice. I just thought that I'd let you know so that you could include it in your review.

Brad, Fleetwood

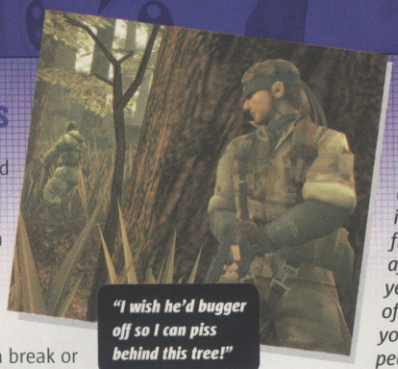
You think we'd get a fact like that wrong? Why not just smack us in the knackers after you've finished insulting us? Pah. We're sulking.

PASSING SOLIDS

I actually wrote to complain about Solid Snake's third adventure due to the realism. You can break a leg? Let me guess. Next they'll be revealing that every so often he has to stop for a tea break or now and then you'll have to turn the console off, so that Mr Snake can answer nature's call in privacy.

Cally, via email

CVG *Two emails printed in one issue... and still no Star Letter prize. Never mind, Cally.*



"I wish he'd bugger off so I can piss behind this tree!"

CVG *We'd like to apologise that one of our inflatables finally died after only a year-and-a-half of battering by you. Tsk. And it's peanuts, not popcorn.*

ACK-ACK FOR CACKMAN

What the *hell* is Cackman's whole purpose in life?

Tarik, London

CVG *Funny, that's what Mrs Cackman keeps asking us too.*

CHIEFY ARAN

Just a few rumours I've heard about the delays of Halo 2. Friends close to Master Chief claim his new wife is causing all the problems, one Samus Aran. "Just as the Chief goes to film an action sequence, Samus starts rubbing her belly and says that the baby is kicking, distracting Chief," said Blinx.

In related news, Microsoft and Nintendo are involved in a bidding war over the rights to any future games from Aran and Chief's offspring. Just thought you'd like to know because I didn't see it covered in your news section.

Egonga, via email

PRO ADULATION SOCCER

I would just like to herald Pro Evolution Soccer 2 as the greatest game ever! That is until Pro 3 gets released. I'm not addicted to the game but it makes itself a way of life.

Richard Lewis, via email

BATTERED STUPID

Quite a few issues back CVG had a free gift, a blow-up novelty thingy that was designed to be hit. After repeated hitting it tore, thus leaving me without a novelty blow-up thingy to vent my rage on. I am very disappointed, CVG. Oh, and I think your magazine smells like popcorn.

Sir Gimpesq

TUNED IN

Can you tell me if a new GBA TV tuner is being made to fit the design of the SP better?

Richy

CVG *We found this one on import at www.lik-sang.com costing around £40, though we can't vouch for how good it is.*

TOMB REFUNDER

I've just bought Tomb Raider: Angel Of Darkness and I'm so disappointed. After waiting over four years with countless delays and date changing, the control system and camera movement are crap. After three days I took it back and got a refund. Cool mag, by the way.

Dave Mack, Leeds

See what happens when you don't pay attention in class

GETAWAY 2

Will there be a follow-up to The Getaway and if there is, when will it be released?

Paige

CVG *Nothing's been officially announced – or denied, and given the commercial success of the first, a sequel seems very likely. We can't see it coming out before Christmas 2004/5, though.*

CREEPY CRAWLY

I want to recommend to everyone the new Sony EyeToy for the PS2. I was shocked at the cheap price of £40 (including cam and game)*[... blah ...]* fun and addictive *[... blah ...]* recommend this game *[... blah ...]*.

Lee, Crawley

CVG *You got shares in Sony, Lee, or just looking for a PR job there?*

Why not kiss that one too while you're at it?

EYESORE

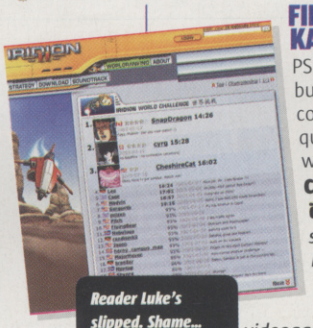
I thought EyeToy was a letdown. Don't get me wrong; it has a great idea behind it. But I just couldn't help feeling that that it could do a bit more. At the moment it stands as a video camera that can sense your actions. The games themselves looked a bit naff.

Justin, Cheltenham

ME ALMOST THE GREATEST

Are you on the World Challenge scoreboard on the Iridion II website? At the moment I'm 10th (horny_campus_man).

Luke, Dartford



Reader Luke's slipped. Shame...

CVG *We bow down before your Iridion might, though recent Challenge CVGs suggest we're a little off form right now. On the plus side, we note you've slipped to 14th. Ha.*

FINISHED, FINITO, KAPUT

PS2 games are brilliant but I end up completing them too quick. Please tell me: what do I do now?

Chris, via email

CVG *So you're saying that you don't know what to do with your life when you're not playing videogames? You're broken in the head, mate. And as with all broken products you should check your warranty. You'll find it about a foot past your sphincter – if you look really closely.*

STAR LETTER

CVG written by Star Trek freaks? Simply not true

SMORGASBORG

■ **Question 1:** Are you a collective? Whenever you talk about you or your opinions in your brilliant magazine, you refer to yourself as 'We at CVG' or 'Here at CVG, we believe...'. Do you have a large hard drive which stores all of your brains and uses them to answer letters or something?

■ **Question 2:** This question is to the RPG guru part of the collective known as Maura Sutton. Why the hell do playable characters not talk in most RPGs? If you went around ignoring people like that in real life you'd probably get a slap.

Peter, via email

CVG *Collective? Nah, just schizophrenic – the entire team is actually the multiple personalities of one neurotic morris dancer in Newcastle. Kind of like a Geordie human smorgasbord. As for your question on RPGs, over to CVG's very own 7/9...*

"Some RPG heroes are indeed the strong silent type, but that's because they're usually preoccupied with calculating their next levelling-up point and trying to understand stuff like Junctioning. They can't spend all day flapping gums just to make you feel special. Now, resistance is futile. You WILL be assimilated."

JOYTECH

Each month's star letter-writer gets some quality peripherals from JOYTECH, so make sure you include your name and address!

WINNER

CONSOLE-NATION CORNER

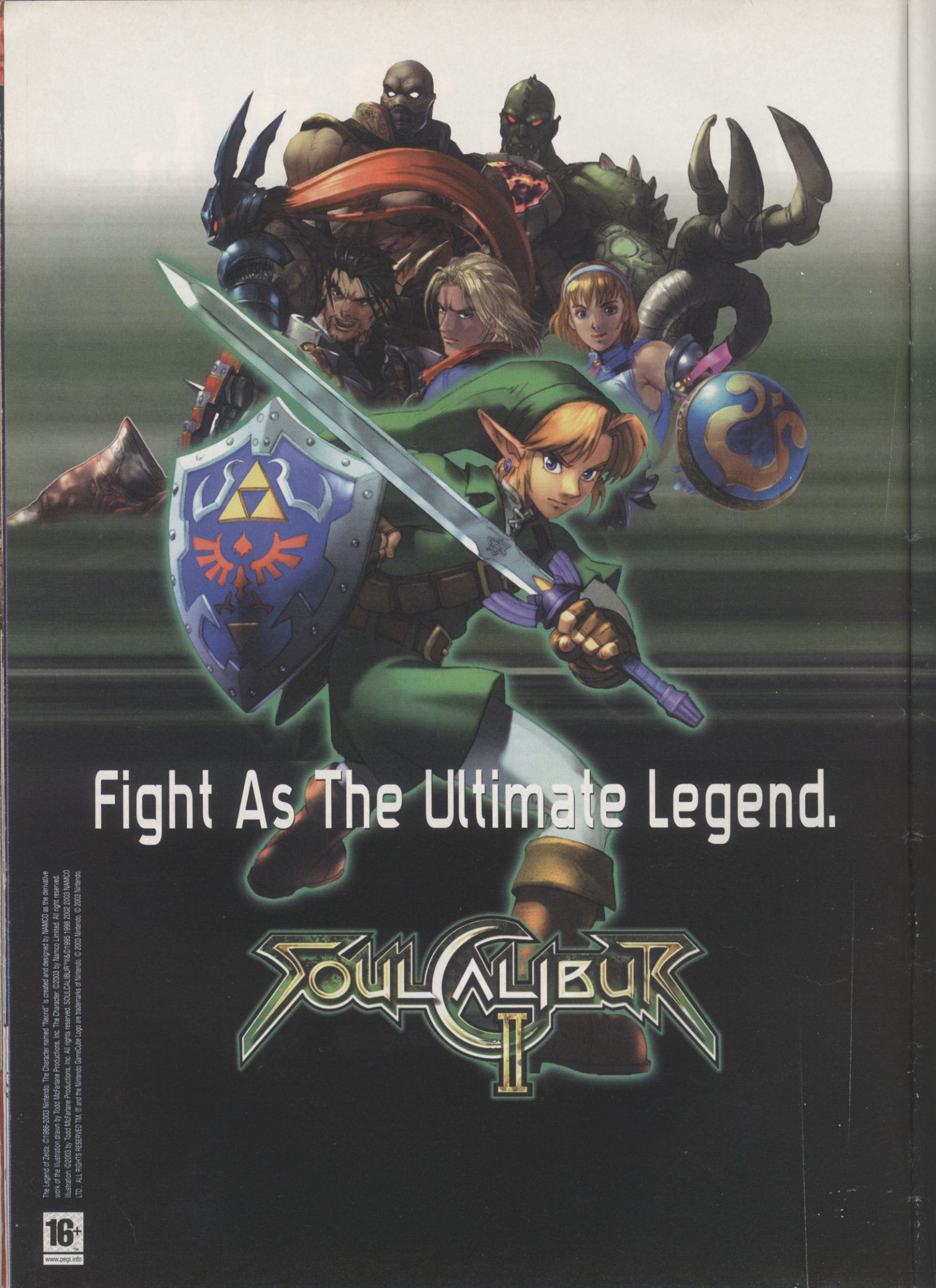
GET TO THE POINT

I buy this magazine every month and first I'd like to say well done. But that's not my point *[are you sure?]*. Every month I turn to the letters section and all I see is 'My console is better than yours' and to be frank I'm fed up with it. Does it really matter if you think your PS2 is better than Bob's GameCube? They're all as good as each other.

Tom, Swansea

CVG *Okay, you can be Frank, but no more Naked Gun jokes. We, too, are fed up with the slurry of mail whingeing and whining... about console willy-waving by other readers.*

In recent months, though, our Mailbag has been bombarded with utterly reasonable letters from nice readers like Tom trying to calm the whole situation down. In fact it's got so boring we're going to have to suspend Console-Nation Corner until you've all turned nasty again.



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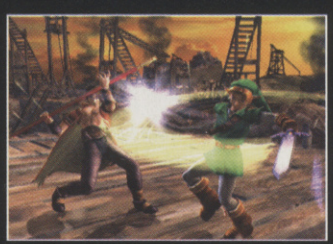
NOM 9/10

"The GameCube version comes out on top with Link as an exclusive character."

Cube 9.2/10

"If there's one thing we're most excited by, it's the thought of playing the game on Nintendo's GameCube controller, which is perfectly suited for SOULCALIBUR control."

IGN CUBE



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OUT NOVEMBER

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

SCEE's pant-staining third-person shooter is aiming for a place in horror game history as the stuff of your worst nightmares. Try not to lose control of your bowels as we take you on an exclusive ride into Hell.

WWW.UK.PLAYSTATION.COM

UPDATE!

ONLY IN CVG!

ghosthunter

WE SNEAKED INTO SCEE'S STUDIO AT THE DEAD OF NIGHT TO BRING YOU A PANT-BROWNING EXCLUSIVE...

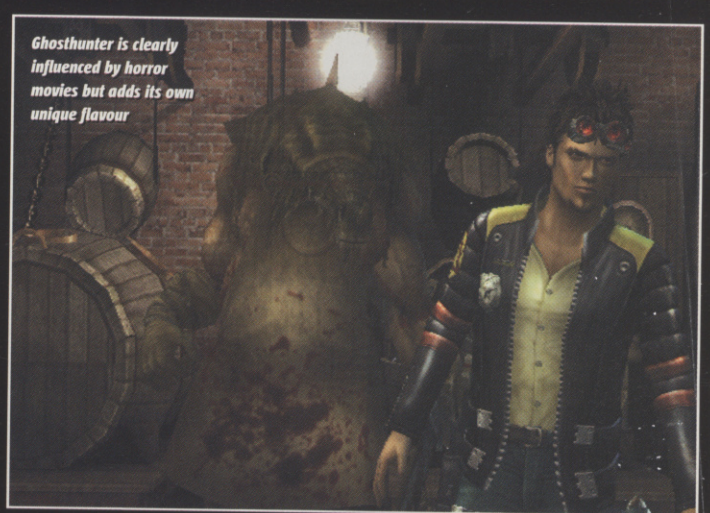
What scares you? A howling beast intent on ripping your head off? An unseen presence whispering in the dark? Or a deserted school, scene of a mass murder, haunted by the tortured victims?

That's just Ghosthunter's first level. After 10 minutes you gotta change your pants. But don't worry, it gets even better – or, horrifically, worse.

Our last look introduced Lazarus Jones, a rookie cop thrown into a world of ghouls and big monsters. CVG was so impressed we snuck back to exclusively bring you more on what will be one of PS2's big hitters come Xmas. Only the developers have played Ghosthunter longer or further than CVG has now, and we're certain about one thing – it's scarier than a Take That reunion. Much.

WHO YA GONNA CALL?

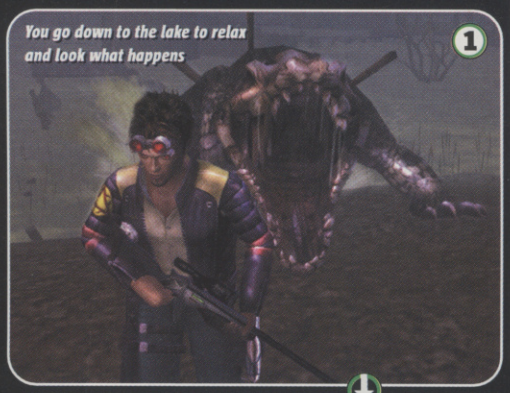
Luckily, Laz is tooled up with some serious ethereal-ass-kicking weaponry.

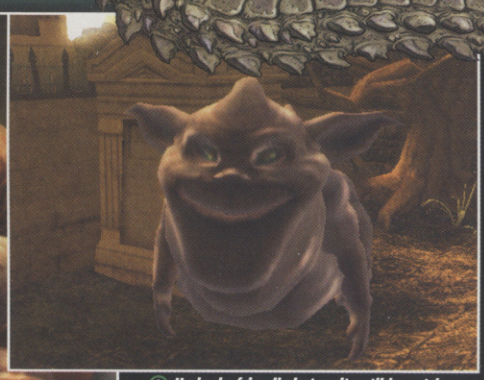


Ghosthunter is clearly influenced by horror movies but adds its own unique flavour

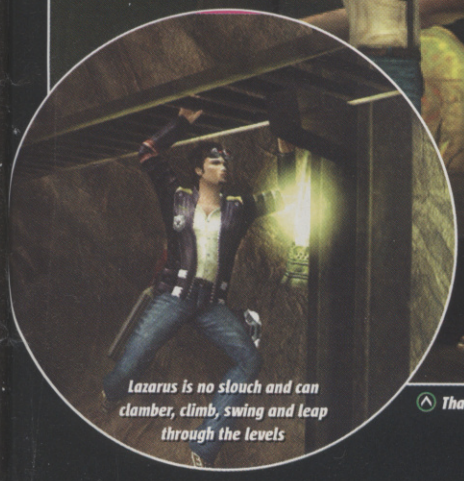
I AIN'T AFRAID OF NO GHOST

The bosses in Ghosthunter aren't your usual end-of-level bad guys. These chaps don't like being dead but they're going to do their best to have you join them. What's really cool – and really creepy – is the macabre detail that's gone into them. Check out this poor hick.





He looks friendly but wait until he catches sight of you straying onto his patch!



Lazarus is no slouch and can clamber, climb, swing and leap through the levels

That's disgusting! No, not his ugly face, check out the monstrous size of those nipples!

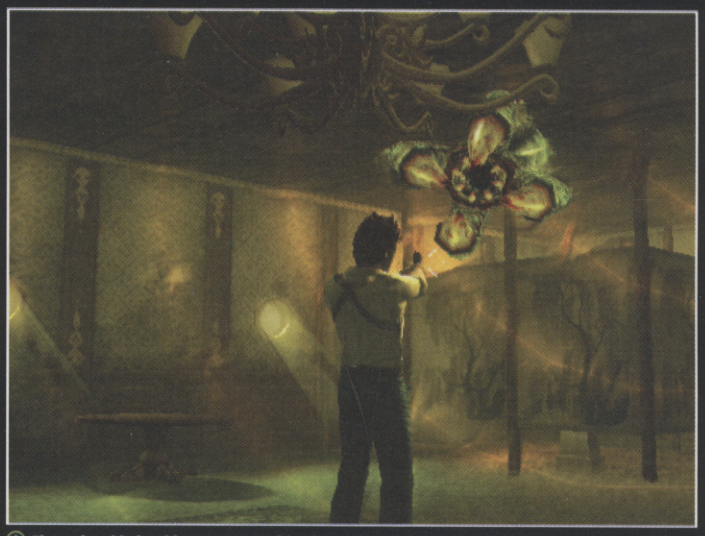
You start with a basic Desert Eagle handgun, but we had a shot of some of the later items like the plasma rifle, the lasso rifle and the grenade launcher. The combat system works really well, with the emphasis placed on your own aiming ability rather than an automatic targeting system.

When you want to send a ghost back into the depths of hell you need to lob your Capture Grenade into it. Do this too soon and the ghoulish creature will spit it back out, but get it right and you can circle its rancid body, peppering it with plasma until the grenade sucks it in. The controls are a little on the slow side at present, but there's plenty of time for them to be perfected yet.

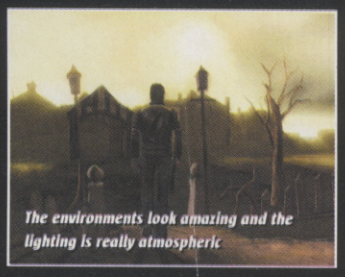
SPECTRE SPECTACULAR

Lazarus comes up against so many types of ghost that you'll have to learn loads of different tactics. Sometimes you must take cover behind walls and trees, leaning out to pick off spooks, and sometimes you'll have to get so close to the ghouls that you can smell their death breath. If you're really close you can shove your Capture Grenade right down their stinking, decaying throats.

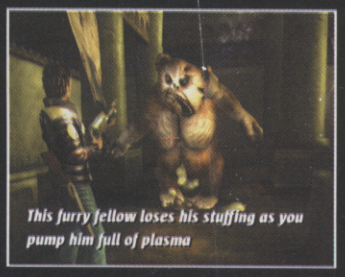
When playing you feel as cool as Lazarus looks and the full-on firefights are good relief from all the creeping tension. Whether you're waiting for a spook to spring out at you, or ducking incoming bullets and spraying plasma at ghosts, your heartbeat never slows. Our only worry is that sometimes the exploration elements disrupt the pace a bit, but we're confident that Studio Cambridge will polish them up.



The cruise ship level is overgrown with a forest of drooling tentacles waiting to tear you apart



The environments look amazing and the lighting is really atmospheric

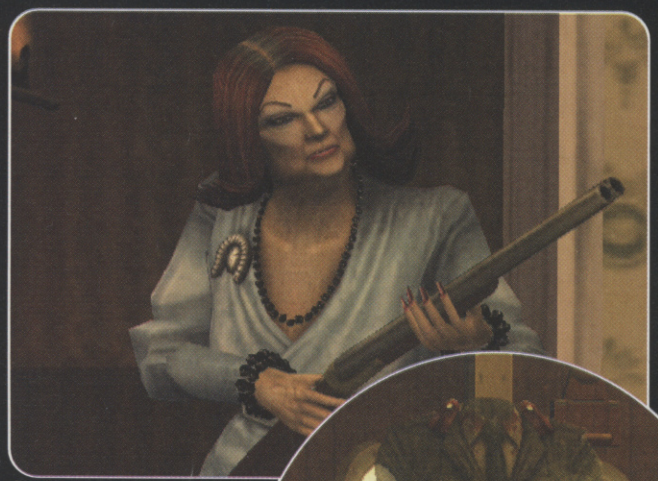


This furry fellow loses his stuffing as you pump him full of plasma

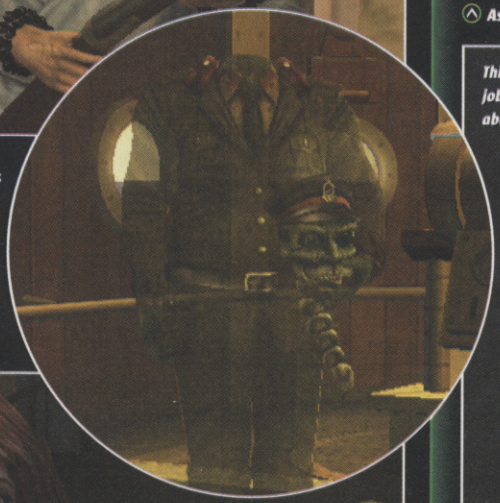
TRUST NO ONE

Like any good movie, Ghosthunter includes a cracking cast of characters.

Part of the fun is trying to figure out their motivations, but be prepared for anything to happen – in Lazarus's world, nothing is as it seems.



Mme Demontfort lives in a big house near the swamps. She seems nice at first, but there's something funny about that name...



This chipper chap is Colonel Fortesque. He and his ghost crew are fighting a beast lurking in his ship – will you help?

Anna is Lazarus's partner, and is kidnapped at the start of the game. You could trust her, if only you could find her

As well as ghosts playing tricks on you, the environments have a habit of changing before your eyes

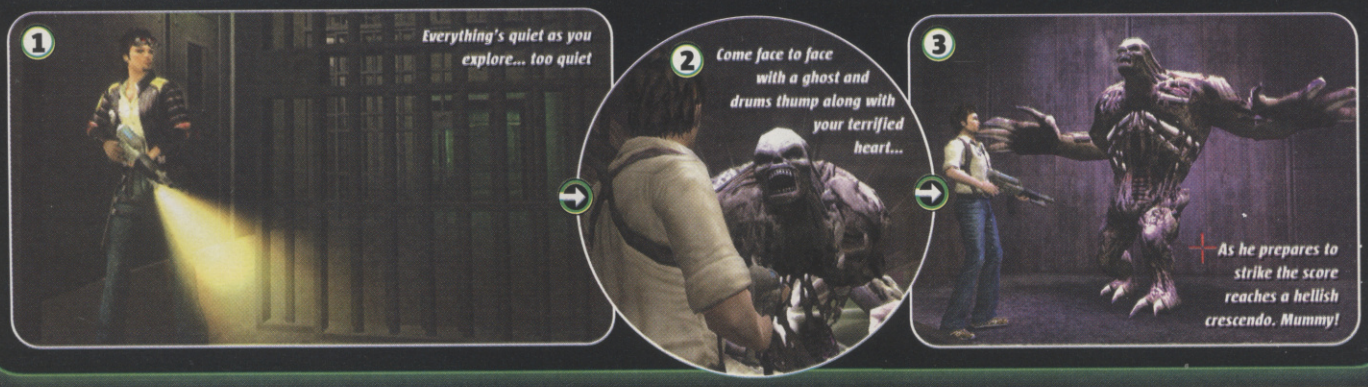
This prison guard is still doing his job even though he's dead. Talk about being a workaholic

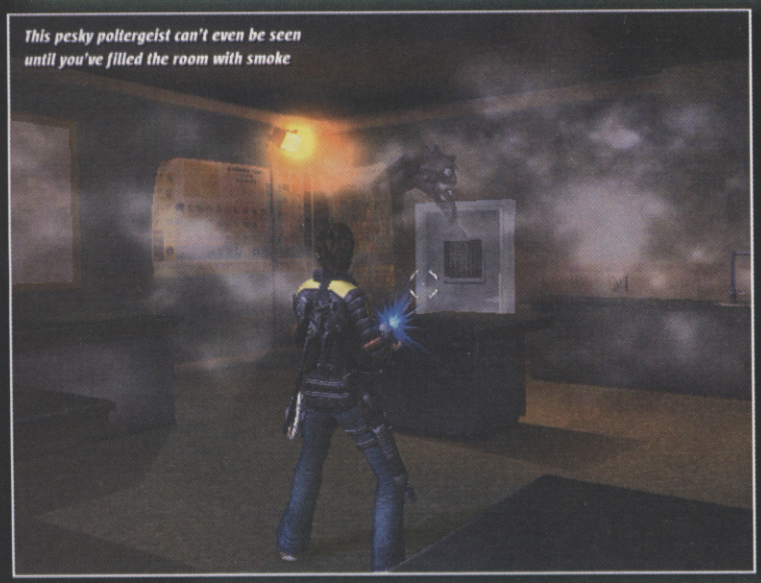
Some of the scariest moments occur when it's just you, your torch and a dark room

SOUNDS LIKE FEAR

One of the most impressive things in Ghosthunter is the fantastic accompanying soundtrack. The music reacts to every move you dare to make.

There are eight layers of instrumentation, so things start off quietly but as the terror is ramped up the music shifts smoothly into a thundering cacophony of fear. The result sounds fantastic and is the best example of reactive game music we've heard to date.





This pesky poltergeist can't even be seen until you've filled the room with smoke

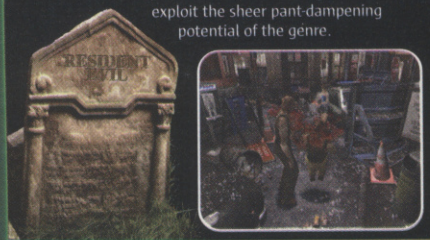
The bosses are imaginatively designed and fill the screen with their spectral bulk

THE HORROR, THE HORROR...

Sony's little machine has a history of horror games as dark as its black casing. Ghosthunter is just the latest in a proud lineage of interactive screamers, but where does it stand in the grisly graveyard of shock software?

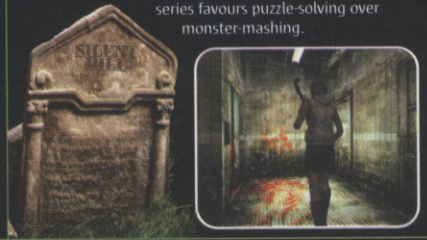
Capcom's legendary Resident Evil series paved the way for the survival horror genre.

By sending legions of shuffling zombies in your direction and keeping your ammunition constantly low, Resi was the first videogame to truly exploit the sheer pant-dampening potential of the genre.



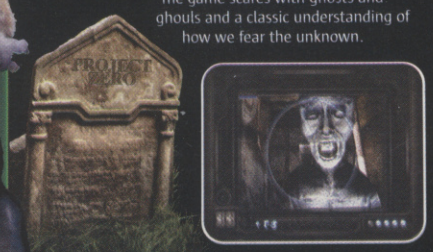
The undertaker of psychological horror, you have to wonder what kind of sicko thinks up stuff like Silent Hill.

What the game does so well is to structure its shocks around a tightly woven plot and turn everyday things into spurting fountains of fear. The series favours puzzle-solving over monster-mashing.



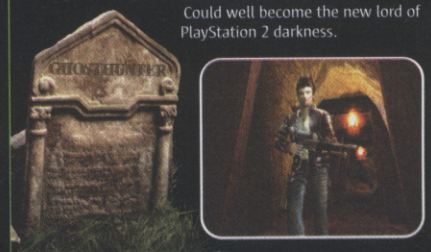
Possibly the world's first and only photo 'em up, Wanadoo's creepshow Project ZERO eschewed the schlock of Resi and the gnawing unease of Silent Hill for a good old-fashioned ghost story.

The game scares with ghosts and ghouls and a classic understanding of how we fear the unknown.



Sony's latest vision of terror adopts the shooting action and shocks of Resi, the puzzle-solving and creepiness of Silent Hill, the ghosts and ghouls of Project ZERO, and tops it all off with some clever horror movie references and a wicked sense of humour.

Could well become the new lord of PlayStation 2 darkness.



I SEE DEAD PEOPLE

The six huge levels are split into sub-levels, offering really varied locations. What's cool is that you are unravelling gruesome mysteries as well as smacking spirits about. You'll discover the awful secret of why the children in a remote village are disappearing, solve a brutal series of crimes in an abandoned prison, or help the long-dead crew of an ocean liner to defeat the monster inside.

Some brilliant environmental effects really heighten the experience and there are lots of really scary little touches like shadows shifting and things moving just out of vision.

It all adds up to an experience that should be as frightening as it is exhilarating. As the long, dark, cold nights of November draw closer, steel yourself for Ghosthunter.

CVG OPINION

A great combination of action and puzzle solving, gripping you by the throat and force-feeding you fear. A real sick puppy, but we can't wait to pet it. **Graeme**

WE LOVE

- Brilliantly designed enemies
- Lots of blasting action
- Dark, creepy, scary

WE HATE

- Controls are a little slow
- Some dull exploring
- Takes its toll on your underwear

INCOMING

ACCESS ALL AREAS TO THE HOTTEST FORTHCOMING GAMES!

HOW CVG'S PREVIEWS WORK

ONLINE GAMING
Can you play the game online, against other gamers around the globe? Find out here

PUBLISHER, DEVELOPER AND RELEASE DATE
Who makes the game and when it's due out, to the best of CVG's knowledge

PLAYERS
How many people can play. If it's anything from one to 32, we'll put 32!

IN A NUTSHELL
A brief summary of what the game is like. If it's an update and CVG has already previewed it we'll also sum up stuff we've said before

FORMAT
The console we played the game on is highlighted red, but other formats it's coming out on are listed too!

WEBSITE
Want more info, more screens and to see it in action? Visit this URL!

- PUBLISHER ACTIVISION
- DEVELOPER ACTIVISION
- OUT: DECEMBER 25

ONLINE GAMING x16

IN A NUTSHELL

Hotly anticipated, super-realistic, sneaky covert-ops sequel to last year's first-person shooter. The team-orientated multiplayer mode encompasses a wide variety of objective-based missions.

GAMECUBE XBOX GBA

WWW.ACTIVISION.COM

THE BEST PICS
See exactly how good (or bad!) the game looks with CVG's sweet-as screenshots

INFO OVERLOAD!
What it's like to play, how it compares to other games and whether it's any good

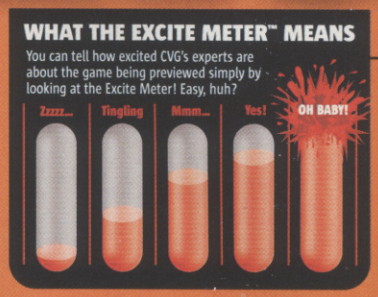
CVG OPINION
What we thought of the game, no matter what stage of development the game is at

WE LOVE
The good things we like about the game so far

WE HATE
The things we'd really like the developers to avoid including in the final game

WHAT THE EXCITE METER™ MEANS

You can tell how excited CVG's experts are about the game being previewed simply by looking at the Excite Meter! Easy, huh?



CVG OPINION — It's looking promising as long as the developer remembers to pay special attention to those dodgy AI routines! Otherwise this is coming along nicely **Mike**

WE LOVE
- *Pretty explosions*
- *Brilliantly violent set pieces*
- *Strong soundtrack*

WE HATE
- *The heroes are quite scarce*
- *No online option... yet*
- *Lack of blood*

Yu-Gi-Oh! THE DUELISTS OF THE ROSES

Two compatible monster cards make a much more powerful card

- PUBLISHER KONAMI
- DEVELOPER KONAMI JAPAN
- OUT: SEPTEMBER 26

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

Yugi's crazy spiky head finally pops up on the PlayStation 2. Expect a whole new type of Yu-Gi-Oh! gameplay, lip-smackingly luscious monster card battling bouts and all your favourite good and bad guys.

WWW.KONAMI.COM

Come the Yugi Revolution, brothers and sisters, the world will be divided in two. Those who Understand, and those who Don't. The U's will be recognised by their claw-shaped hands, malformed from clutching decks of Yu-Gi-Oh! trading cards and from constant GBA abuse. They will have shiny happy faces, though.

The D's will be known by their deeply furrowed brows and their constant questions. "Just what is this Yu-Gi-Oh that makes the joyful masses dribble?" they will mutter. "What does it mean? How do you play it? What the hell is a Blue-Eyes White Dragon?"

You can always turn off the monster battles, but why deny yourself the pleasure?

Never fear, Duelists of the Roses is here to help us join the ranks of the Understanding, or at the very least the ranks of the Oh, I Think I Get It Now.

DUEL IDENTITY

The first thing that Yu-Gi-Oh! fans will notice is that the gameplay is quite different from the card game or any of the PSone, GBA and GBC Yu-Gi-Oh! outings. For starters there's a sorely needed training section conducted by High Druid Simon McMooran in which he explains the basics of Duelling. He also outlines

Keeping four or five Magic cards in your active deck gives you an attack option

YU-GI-OH! BASICS

Your overall card collection can be as large as you want, but you must ensure you have assembled at least 40 cards into your active deck before you start a duel.

Each card that you use in the turn-based bout is randomly selected, although you do get to pick from a hand of up to five cards. You can choose to Summon either Monster, Magic or Trap cards with varying effects.

First select your Deck Leader to Summon a card onto the board

Choose the card with the highest ATK and DEF points to lead with

Laying a card face up in the attacking position risks revealing too much to your opponent. Get practising your poker face!

Laying a card face down and sideways protects your Deck Leader from direct LP hits. That's more like it

Terrain Effects enable compatible cards to move an extra space and increase their ATK and DEF points by 500

After winning a duel you get to collect extra cards by spinning the Yu-Gi-Oh! slot machine-o-matic

The complex rules may initially seem quite arbitrary. For instance, you can only capture your opponent's red or white rose if their Deck Cost (DC) is higher than yours

Trap cards turn the tables and thwart your opponent's attack plans. Sneaky

two brand new gameplay elements: the Deck Leader concept and the introduction of movement and positioning around the game board.

The result of these innovations, clearly designed to exploit the processing power of the PS2, is to enhance the strategic elements of Duelling. Battles feel much more like chess or draughts as you move your cards around the board and plan how to guard your Deck Leader against direct attacks.

CARDS ON THE TABLE

Visually there's probably not much difference between Duelists Of The Roses and the PSone game, Forbidden Memories. The same combination of animé-style storyboards and text is used to describe the plot scenarios, and the new gaming board still looks fairly uninspiring even with the added terrain elements.

It's not until you get to witness the 3D one-on-one battles between two monster cards that you start to get a sense that the PS2 has enhanced the Yu-Gi-Oh! experience. As any Yu-Gi-Oh! fan will tell you, looks are the least important aspect of the whole package. Sure, it's great to see Mai Valentine's upturned nose looking cute and perky in glorious PS2 technicolour,

IN FOR THE KILL

In previous versions of Yu-Gi-Oh! the object has always been to win by destroying your opponents' cards until their Life Point (LP) total of 8000 plummets right down to zero.

In Duelists Of The Roses the LP total is only 4000 and there are three main victory conditions. The fourth scenario involves unleashing Exodia the Forbidden One and all limb cards, but that would be a rare occurrence.

Reduce the opposing Deck Leader's LP to zero, either directly or by destroying cards with a lower value than your own

It would be a good move now to occupy all the blue Summon Areas that surround your opponent's Deck Leader

If the duel takes so long that you run out of turns, the player with the highest LP score wins

In Deck mode you can view your favourite card monsters from every possible angle. This one badly needs a manicure

One of these is about to be pulped. It's a cruel world

Finally! A tutorial to explain the intricacies of Yu-Gi-Oh! to anyone who isn't Stephen Hawking

YUGI GOES TO SCHOOL

The usual Yu-Gi-Oh! storylines that fans will be familiar with from the cartoon series have been replaced. Duelists Of The Roses instead features an historical storyline borrowed from 1480s England. So now you know what the developers' favourite school subject was.

The Wars of the Roses are recreated as a card duelling campaign, with Yugi representing Henry Tudor and Kaiba acting on behalf of the House of York. Obviously.

The first part of the campaign takes place near Stonehenge - it's all very mystical

You can choose whether to fight on behalf of Yugi or Seto

but it's how well the game engine duplicates the addictive, brain-stretching card-duelling strategy of the original game that really counts. Duelists Of The Roses knows what its priorities are, and appears to have them nailed bang on.

It's obvious that much of the processing power has gone into the sophisticated AI that makes playing against the computer equally as challenging as duelling against your living, breathing human mate. In fact, the computerised enemies in the main story scenario (including old favourites Rex Raptor and Weevil Underwood) are such cunning and wily opponents that you'd be well advised to practise in the Custom Game option and win some new cards first. Otherwise you run the risk of getting demoralised by frequent butt-whippings. Don't say we didn't warn you... CVG

CVG OPINION

Fans will love it. Polish your duelling strategy as you play through the new storyline. It may be a bit hardcore for the casual gamer, though. **Maura**

WE LOVE

- Fantastic AI
- Move around like in chess
- Characters as historical figures

WE HATE

- Deck screen has too much info
- Long-time fans might dislike moving around the board

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GET THEM BEFORE THEY GET YOU!

MISS

HIT

Starburst SOUR CHEWS

Starburst SOUR CHEWS

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F-ZERO GC

■ PUBLISHER
NINTENDO
■ DEVELOPER
SEGA
■ OUT: OCTOBER

ONLINE GAMING x4

IN A NUTSHELL

If F-Zero were an animal, it would be a cheetah. If it were a car, it'd be the Thrust SSC. Get the picture? F-Zero is fast – really fast. And the racing action rocks, too. The best Nintendo release since The Wind Waker is burning its way to a Cube near you.

WWW.NINTENDO.COM

Action so fast your eyes will throb. Simple controls that make the pad feel like an extension of your body. Competitors so aggressive it's like racing real people. Graphics so slick they make other racers look pants. These are a few of the things that make F-Zero GX cool, yet it barely scratches the surface.

We've been glued to the Japanese edition for the past month, and we're certain it'll be one of the brightest jewels in Nintendo's crown.

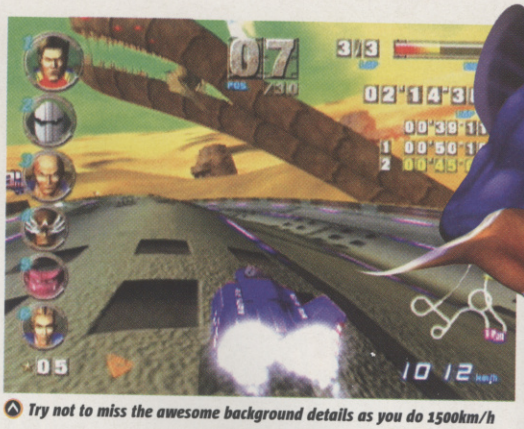
SPEED OF LIFE

Although the gameplay is virtually identical to 1998's N64 version, F-Zero GX's exceptional sense of speed and beautiful graphics bring the 13-year-old licence bang up to date, also adding new modes and challenges that add depth to the traditional gameplay.

Naturally, the game's speed is its most striking feature. Although the pace is similar to the N64 version, the beautifully realised, intricately detailed worlds make the illusion of speed more convincing. Hurtling around the corkscrews and loops is one of the most thrilling game experiences since a load of bearded boffins decided Space War would be a good way to make money and get girls.

BANG ON TRACK

Aside from maximising the sense of speed, F-Zero GX's lush worlds also



Try not to miss the awesome background details as you do 1500km/h

As in the N64 version, Fire Field is a terrifying and exhilarating ride

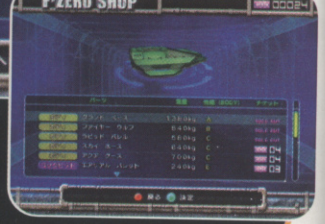
CUSTOM MADE

F-Zero GX also allows players to get creative and customise their racing machines: the garage lets you tweak your racer's performance, the emblem editor provides an opportunity to create your own decals and the machine store features bodies, cockpits and boosters that can be used to create unique ships.

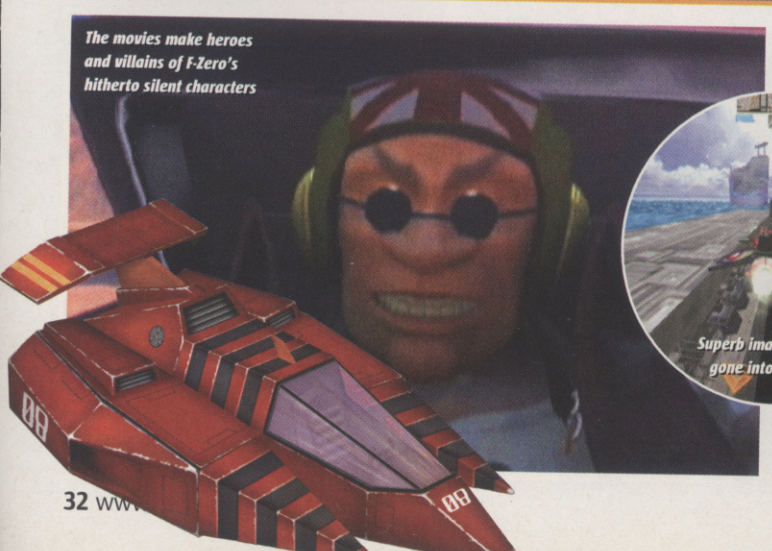
You are given a series of emblems to choose from that can be stamped on your ship

Starting in the garage, you can create your own ship and fiddle with its settings to suit your racing style

If you don't like what you see, you can create your own emblems by using the simple drawing package



As you win races and earn credits you can buy new bits and bobs to enhance your racing machine



The movies make heroes and villains of F-Zero's hitherto silent characters

Superb imagination has gone into the tracks

F-Zero GX is one of the toughest racers ever devised and only experts will reap its rewards

The time attack mode is a great way to improve your performance on the grand prix circuits

Spin in a tight circle by hitting Z and bust past rivals

View biographies in the pilot profiles menu

make for nerve-jangling races. From the verdant Green Plant where fallen leaves whip around your craft as it burns along the track, to the terrifying Fire Field were the action is staged above a raging inferno, the tracks are imaginative, sexy and surprising, constantly keeping players on their toes.

EDGE OF YOUR SEAT

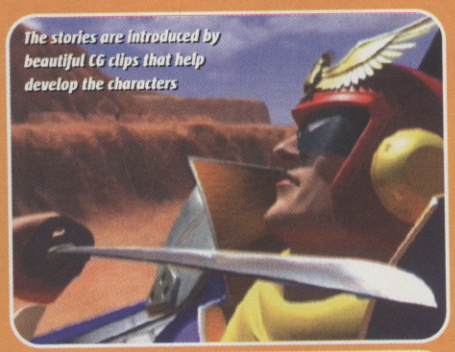
As in the N64 version, each race features 30 competitors, making the action tense and edgy as you try to fight your way to the front while avoiding belligerent rivals who will try to block your path and knock you out of the way of upcoming speed boosts. It's rare that so many competitors should feature in a racing game, and as each one has his own distinct personality and racing style it makes for one of the most electrifying experiences around.

Along with the novel system where you can sacrifice your shields for speed boosts, a range of modes to test different skills and a slew of options to customise your machines, F-Zero GX is shaping up to be one of 2003's most compelling titles.

TELL US A STORY

Another new addition is the story mode where you get to follow the fortunes of that bad boy in blue, Captain Falcon.

The mode features 10 objective-based chapters where you have to complete tasks such as travelling at a certain speed to avoid detonating a bomb, and cash earned during races can be used to unlock new story stages.



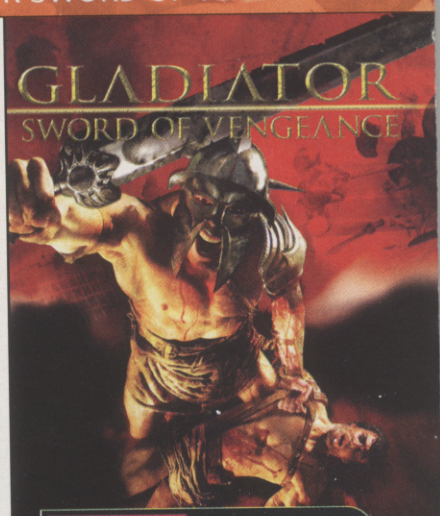
The stories are introduced by beautiful CG clips that help develop the characters

The races don't always take place on normal tracks, one of the first being staged in Captain Falcon's training room

In this race you have to avoid falling boulders that cascade onto the dirt track ahead

The multiplayer mode is as much fun as a barrel of drunken monkeys and doesn't slow down one jot

To increase your shields and boost reserve, drive over these pink strips

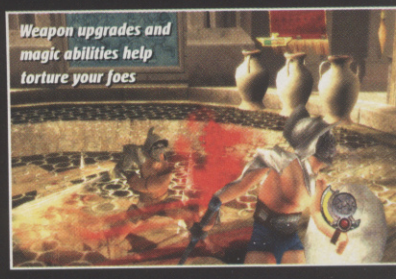


PUBLISHER ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER ACCLAIM
OUT OCTOBER 3
XBOX PC
ONLINE GAMING
WWW.ACCLAIM.COM/GAMES

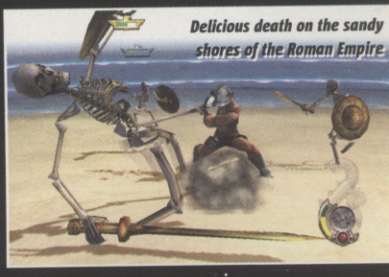
With production values as high as your hero's testosterone levels, Gladiator certainly looks the part.

Your journey from sun-bleached Gladiatorial arenas to the pastel-shades of Elysium – the place where heroes go when spared death by the gods – to fiery caverns and hellish underworlds is a beautifully stylised one. Enemies too are astounding, from the detail on the human gladiators to the intricately depicted skeleton warriors that rise up to eat your face.

The gameplay isn't quite so beautiful and is primarily about slashing your living and undead enemies to sticky pieces: What's clever is that you have both a primary and secondary target lock, so you can switch between two foes at will and chain combo attacks between them. Perfect for dealing with the multiple swarming enemies you encounter right at the game's outset. Early indications hint at entertaining, if a little simplistic, mythological action.



Weapon upgrades and magic abilities help torture your foes



Delicious death on the sandy shores of the Roman Empire

CVG OPINION Formidable speeds, simple controls and unparalleled presentation ensure F-Zero GX's status as one of the best racers in an overcrowded market. **Dave**

WE LOVE
- Jaw-dropping speed
- Eye-popping graphics
- Pant-wetting excitement

WE HATE
- The cheesy N64 robot announcer who counted down at the start of each race is gone. Boo!

EXCITE METER

WE LOVE
- Beautiful visuals
- Brutal action, lots of blood
- Tactical fighting

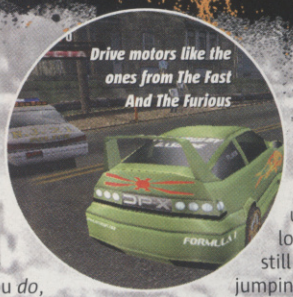
WE HATE
- Story a bit slow to get going
- Relatively small and limited arenas to explore

EXCITE METER

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND T.H.U.G.

For the first time in Tony Hawk's there are difficulty settings: Beginner, Normal and Sick

You still get dealt challenges by speaking to punters in the streets à la Tony Hawk's 4



Drive motors like the ones from The Fast And The Furious

- PUBLISHER ACTIVISION
- DEVELOPER NEVERSOFT
- OUT: NOVEMBER

ONLINE GAMING x4

IN A NUTSHELL

Tony takes a backstage position and lets you hog all the limelight. Expect more mental concrete-mashing shenanigans in the fifth Pro Skater outing, and bundles of innovative features.

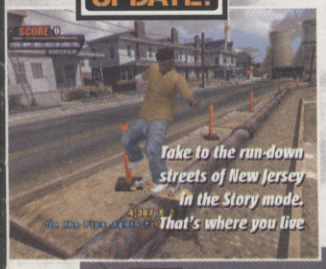
WWW.NEVERSOFT.COM

UPDATE!

Nowadays you don't need a big comedy Mario moustache or hips 'n' lips like Lara in order to become a videogame megastar.

Games like GTA have proved that it's what you *do*, not how recognisable a character you are, that matters. Just look at Vice City's hero. He's Joe Average, not some distracting pantomime icon, and so makes it feel like you're the star appearing on screen. Tony Hawk's Underground takes this idea to the next level, because *you are the star*.

You don't have to spend hours fiddling around in a complicated editing menu screen creating some Frankenstein lookalike of yourself. Take a digital snap of your ugly mug, email it to Neversoft, within a minute you'll get an email with a password, which you use to download your face into the game. Shazaam! Now you're ready to go on an extreme journey from zero to hero.



Take to the run-down streets of New Jersey in the Story mode. That's where you live

OLLIE UP THE RANKS

THUG's new Story mode sees you ride out of obscurity and into a pro skater's paradise. Getting rich and famous calls for you to climb off your board for the first time in Hawk history, clamber up to otherwise inaccessible locations and drive fast cars. You still spend most of the time jumping 'n' grinding the concrete, but there's more freedom than ever.

MAKE ALL THE RIGHT MOVES

The urban adventure kicks off in your bedroom. You're fixing a deck and listening to some tunes when one of your mates suddenly pops up outside the window and slaps a flyer on the glass with Chad Muska's face on it. The pro skater is coming to town today!

When the cutscene finishes, you're taken through a few challenges that teach you how to use the new off-the-deck moves. Manoeuvres like the Caveman, where you jump onto your deck while running, and the Acid Drop, that sees you leaping off your deck at the top of a halfpipe and walking onto the lip.

Once you've cracked these skills it's off to the skate park to see Muska in action. It's up to you to catch his attention by popping your own smooth moves.

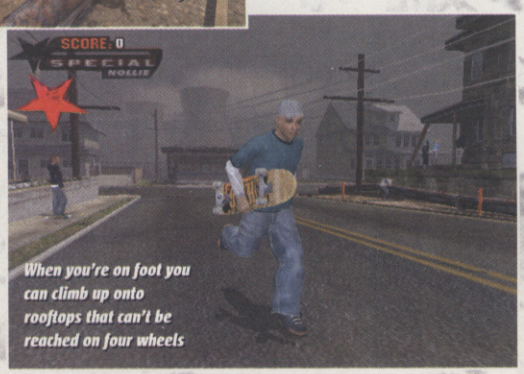
Only this opening encounter is playable at the moment, but Neversoft ensures us that the challenges and extreme action will intertwine with an awesome dramatic plot involving back-stabbing, fierce chases and crazy objectives.

THUG will feature changing weather effects and a real-time day and night system

TRICKS AND KICKS

Forever the innovator, Neversoft has not only introduced a slick, in-depth Story mode to the extreme sports genre but there are more top-drawer gameplay additions and new features to ensure THUG is the essential way to play.

No longer are you confined to pre-programmed stunts. There's a Trick Editor, which allows you to customise and create your own moves. Additionally you can create your own levels and goals. Share all of your creations with the online community or just stick 'em on a memory card for your mates to enjoy. Skateboarding is moving forward and yet again it's Tony who's leading the revolution.



When you're on foot you can climb up onto rooftops that can't be reached on four wheels

Mastermind your own goals in levels you've created or in any stage you've unlocked

The Park Editor option is getting forever closer to giving you Sim City-like levels of freedom

STARS OF TOMORROW

It couldn't be more simple to get yourself into the game, as long as you have a PS2 network adaptor and access to the Internet. Once there, mapping your face onto the basic character model is even easier.

Check which bit of Tony's face is highlighted and then move the little cross over the same facial feature on your digital photo

Once you've marked the eyes, nose and mouth, you can adjust the proportions so that the head shape is identical to your own

CVG OPINION

The freshest Pro Skater experience since the original. We love the Story mode, trick builder, level creator – and being able to get off the board! **Mike**

WE LOVE

- Engaging story-led escapades
- It's all about you
- Make your own moves
- Online features

WE HATE

- The graphics aren't much better than in Tony Hawk's 4

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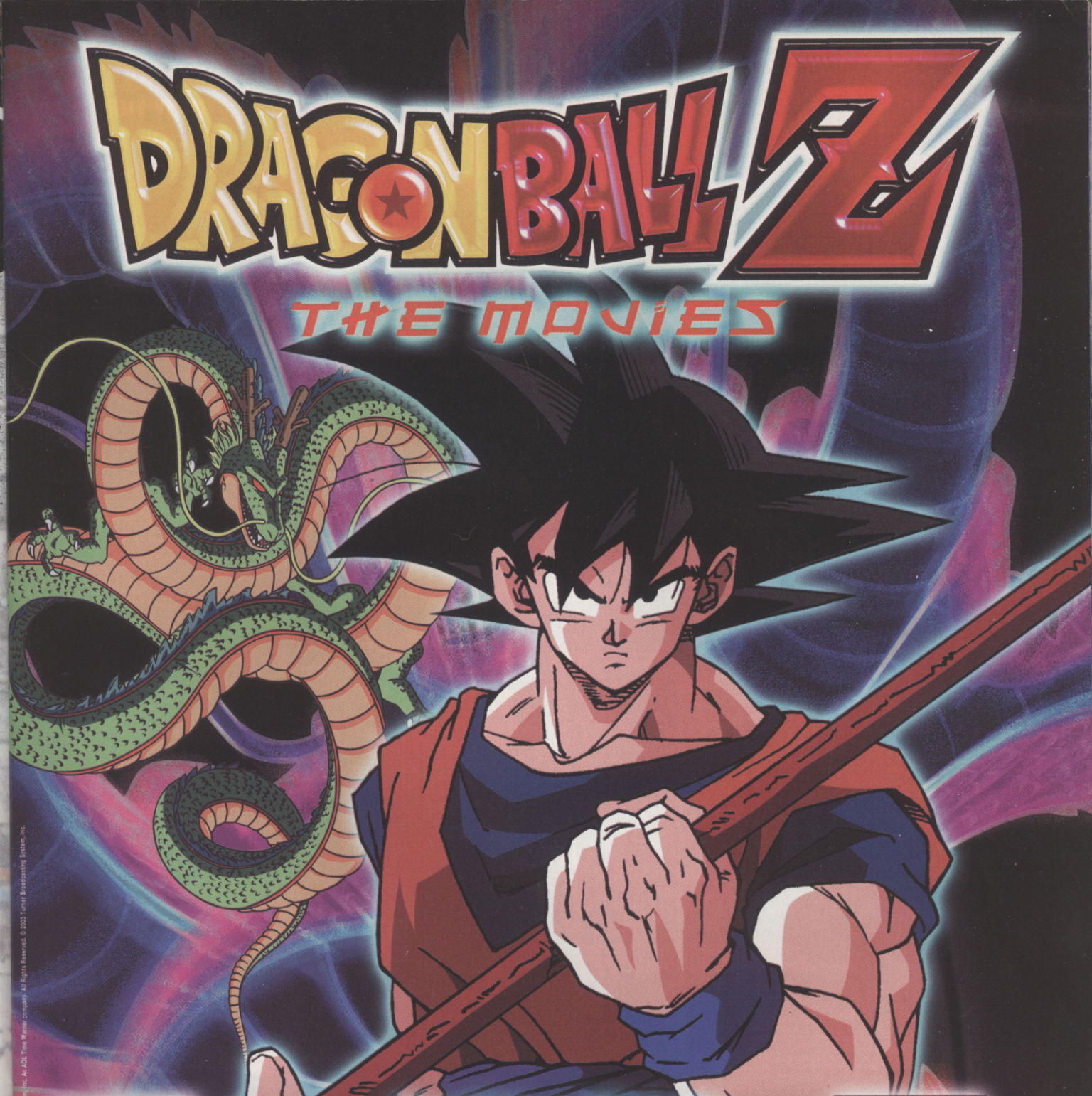
DRAGON BALL Z

THE MOVIES



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IN A NUTSHELL

Consisting of equal parts Halo, The Matrix and Jedi Knight, Advent Rising is a third-person action title with designs on being the best game ever made.

WWW.ADVENTTRILOGY.COM

More than 10 weapons are planned, and they will all be available from the beginning of the game

Gideon has all the right moves, enough to make Neo turn a particularly lurid shade of green with envy

ONLY THE BEGINNING

Award-winning sci-fi author Orson Scott Card was so impressed with GlyphX's storyline that he agreed to write, cast and direct the dialogue for the game.

He's also on the case writing the Advent Trilogy of novels and a screenplay for the first Advent movie. Busy chap!

Originally intended for PC, The Big M has done another Halo and swooped in to ensure GlyphX's debut game will arrive first for Xbox. Either Microsoft is desperate (unlikely), or it has a simmering suspicion that Advent Rising could be one of those next big things we hear so much about.

Having seen the game in action we can see why Microsoft has been keen to secure the game for Xbox: as in Halo sci-fi action is the order of the day, an alien menace again intent on wiping out humankind. You get to shoot guns and you can pilot all manner of vehicles, from Warthog-style Hummers to speeder bikes and dropships.

Humans are being hunted to extinction, poor souls

But whereas Halo had you playing through the eyes of grizzled veteran Master Chief, Advent's hero Gideon Wyeth is less willing – more like Luke Skywalker, only with better hair.

COMBAT EVOLVES

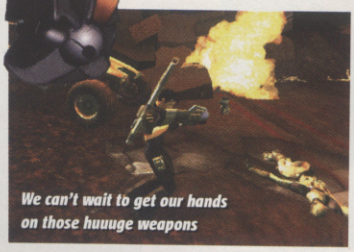
What will ensure Advent rises above cries of it being some wannabe Halo clone are the varied and spectacular range of combat styles on offer. Not only is there a full complement of weapons and drivable vehicles, but as Gideon learns his destiny his Force-like powers begin to manifest themselves in ever more powerful ways.

By the end you can slow down time, pick up and hurl house-sized vehicles and even possess the bodies of your enemies. Halo 2 remains the highlight on the Xbox radar, but this is a blip worth keeping an eye on. CVG

Not as cool as Halo's warthog but Gideon can at least pick this baby up

You can explore the inside of some of the vehicles

Big levels – and we mean BIG



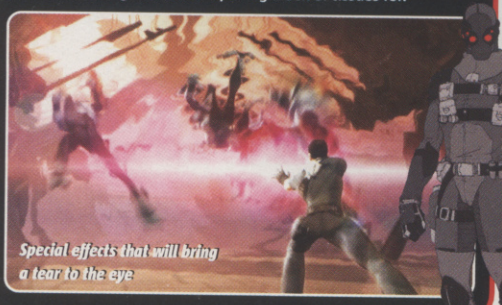
We can't wait to get our hands on those huuuge weapons

'Ave some of that, alien scum!

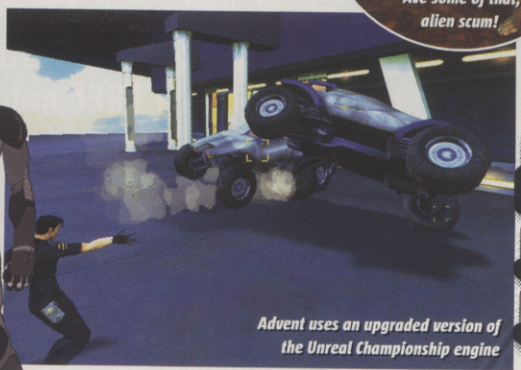
The PC version will follow six months later

EMOTION SICKNESS

Just how the developer plans to do it is unclear, but GlyphX wants Advent to be as emotional a game as Final Fantasy VII was (which caused at least one unnamed CVG staffer to burst into tears). Could just be the first game worth opening a box of tissues for.



Special effects that will bring a tear to the eye



Advent uses an upgraded version of the Unreal Championship engine

CVG OPINION

No-name developers have rocked the games world before but although we hope to be proven wrong, we think Advent Rising is a tad too ambitious. **Rich**

WE LOVE

- Stylish combat moves and special powers
- Full arsenal of weapons

WE HATE

- No co-op mode planned
- Gideon Wyeth is no name for a proper hero!

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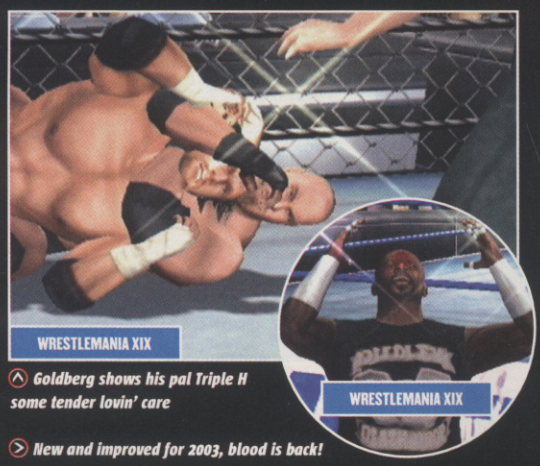
WWE WrestleMania XIX vs WWE Raw 2 Ruthless Aggression

■ PUBLISHER
THQ
■ DEVELOPER
YUKES
■ OUT: OCTOBER 2003
x4

IN A NUTSHELL

Faster moving and with more control than WM XVIII, XIX offers new modes of play, greater animations and character models plus the addition of limb-specific damage, blood and the bizarre Revenge mode.

WWW.THQ.COM



Goldberg shows his pal Triple H some tender lovin' care

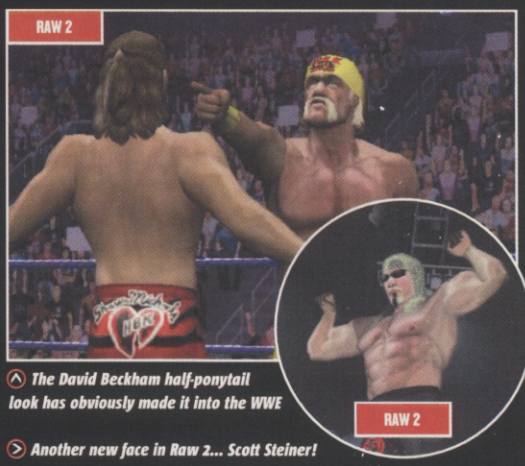
New and improved for 2003, blood is back!

■ PUBLISHER
THQ
■ DEVELOPER
ANCHOR
■ OUT: SEPTEMBER
x4

IN A NUTSHELL

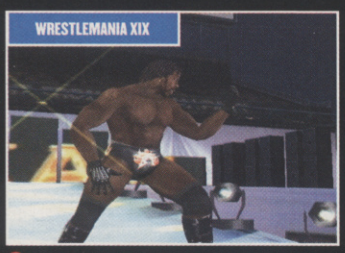
A superior sequel with a huge host of features that will take full advantage of the Xbox hard drive, including four human players in Season mode and extra storage space for your CAW creations.

WWW.THQ.COM

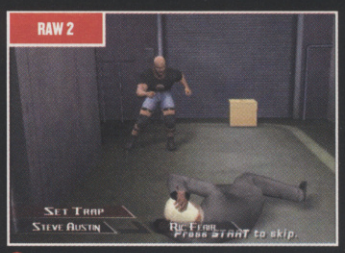


The David Beckham half-ponytail look has obviously made it into the WWE

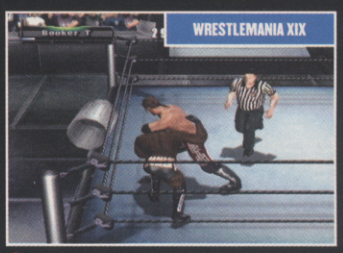
Another new face in Raw 2... Scott Steiner!



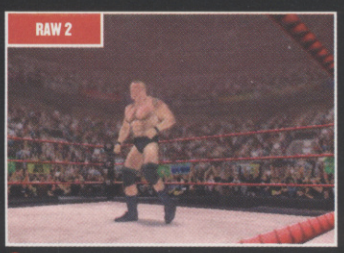
Booker T feels the power of his grand entrance, proudly displaying his huuuge thighs



Setting a trap is just one of the options of how to interfere in Season mode



Chris Jericho starts putting the hurt on, the referee in anxious attendance



The crowd shows its appreciation – or is it just baying for fresh wrestler blood?

The WWE and THQ are about to start a format face-off as they unleash two wrestling titles on rival consoles. It's WrestleMania XIX vs. Raw 2, GameCube vs. Xbox. Who will win? Here's what to expect.

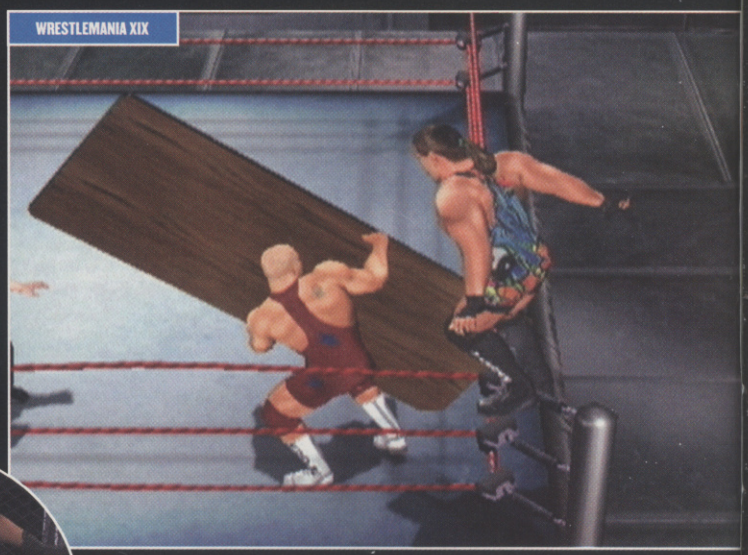
With improved and updated rosters, new animations and new match types, both Raw 2 and WrestleMania XIX are already worth the wait if you were a fan of the originals. The in-ring action has also been overhauled with both games now playing faster, and there's no more annoying lag between pressing the button on the Xbox pad and seeing the move eventually performed. Both titles have improved control, with far more counters and reversal moves available.

BROKEN LIMBS AND BLOOD

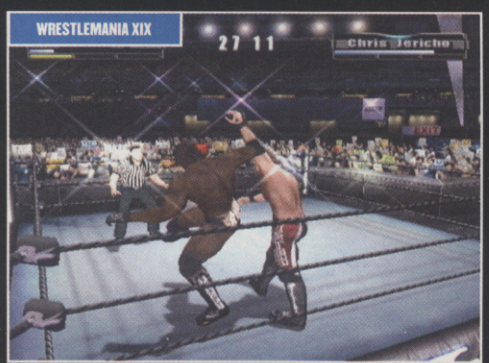
WM XIX has a few neat additions that might make the Raw 2 crowd jealous. Limb-specific damage, last seen in Def Jam Vendetta, allows an added element of strategy to enter matches as you can now really force submission victories on your opponent and not have to rely on pins as much.

For the supposed kid-friendly GameCube there's also another feature that wrestling fans have been screaming about for years – blood! Yep, GC wrestlers can now bleed. If they take a hard enough hit they'll drop to their knees as claret gushes from their forehead... happy now?

Two simple features you might think, but they weren't deemed worthy for inclusion in Raw 2. One important thing to remember about THQ's wrestling titles is that they're all format exclusives and different development teams make

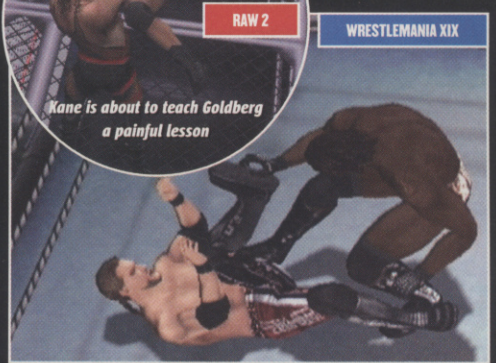


Oldest trick in the book: RVD sets up Angle, pantomime-style... he's behind you, man!

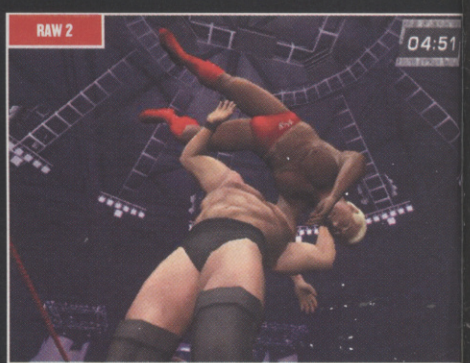


Booker and Jericho swap armpit hair removal tips

Kane is about to teach Goldberg a painful lesson



If you think it looks bad now, it'll hurt even more in the morning



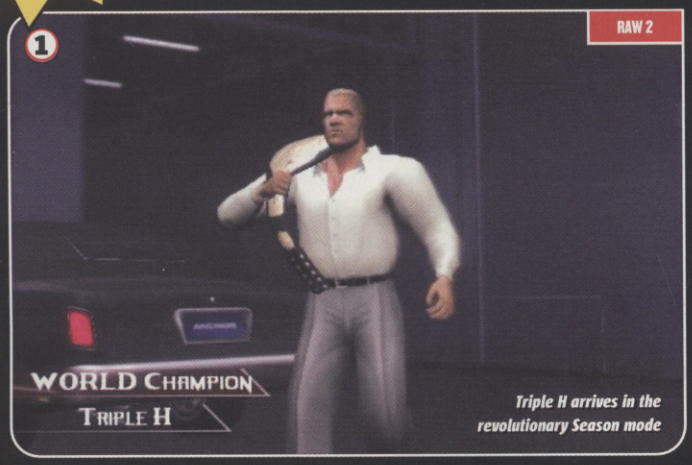
The perfect angle to drink in every rippling muscle

RAW 2 BEST FEATURE

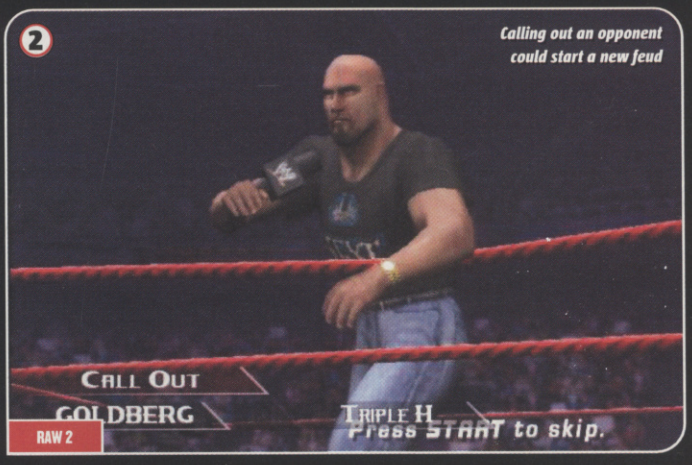
Raw 2 has to take the prize on best feature. What is it?

The Xbox hard drive, that's what, which is called into action in several areas of the game. The ability to rip CDs to create unique wrestler entrances already has us salivating.

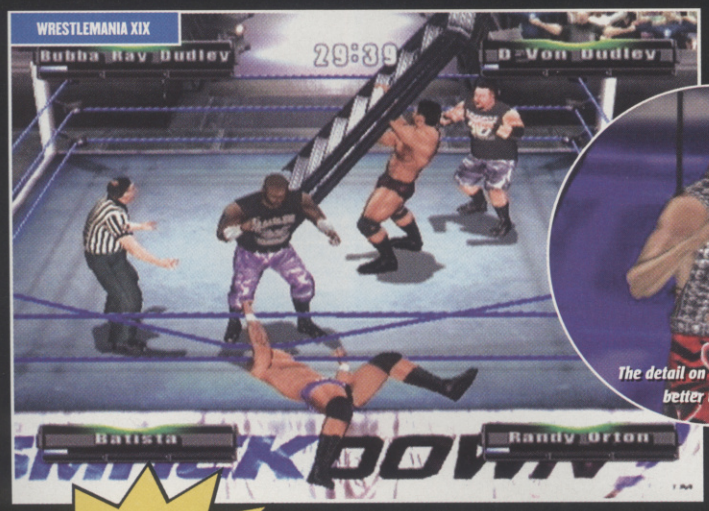
The extra storage space will also allow you to create an army of CAW characters. Plus the memory is called into play during the Season mode, keeping track on who's feuding and who's allied. Xbox hard drive, we salute you!



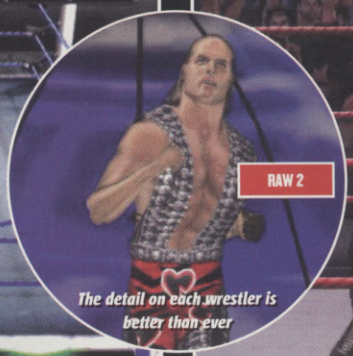
Triple H arrives in the revolutionary Season mode



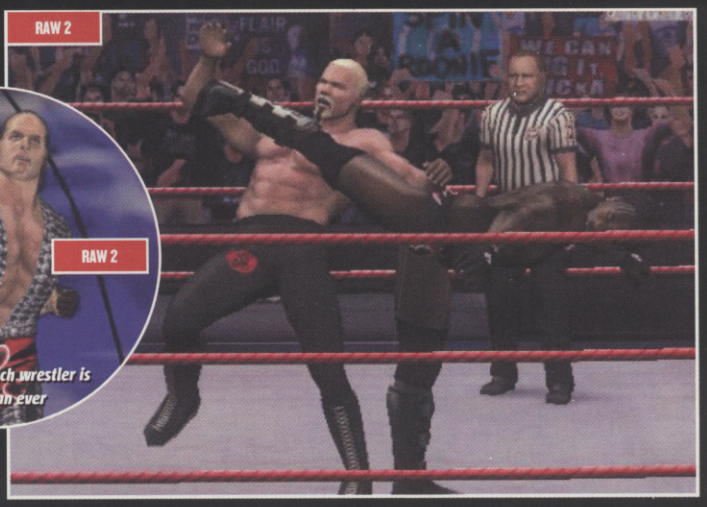
Calling out an opponent could start a new feud



A typical TLC match. Watch the carnage unfold



The detail on each wrestler is better than ever



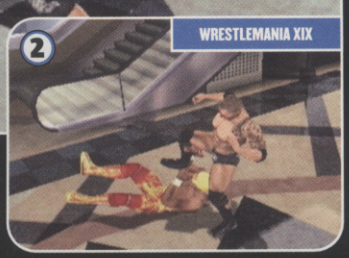
"You sure I haven't trod in anything? Something smells real funny and it ain't my armpits"

WXIX WEIRDEST FEATURE

Revenge is what Yukes is calling WrestleMania XIX's alternative to a conventional Season mode.

Instead of competing for the different titles week in, week out as you will in Raw 2, in Revenge you're kicked out of the WWE! What's worse, you're forced to fight security guards and construction workers as you wander the streets in your wrestling attire. Watch as your favourite superstars go from hero to zero. It's down to you to put them back where they belong, but will you want to?

The Rock takes the smack to the mall. Should spice up the average shopping trip



It's good to see wrestler's wandering around town in their pants!

them. WM XIX comes from Yukes, the wrestling connoisseurs responsible for the SmackDown! series. Raw 2 hails from Anchor, responsible for the hard-hitting Pride FC and the less successful original Raw.

So who holds the pedigree? Definitely Yukes if you like arcade action. But while Raw 2 might not offer as much finesse in the ring, it shouldn't be dismissed. This is a major improvement over last year's game with a lot of refinements as well as a number of unique features that will really take advantage of the Xbox's hard drive.

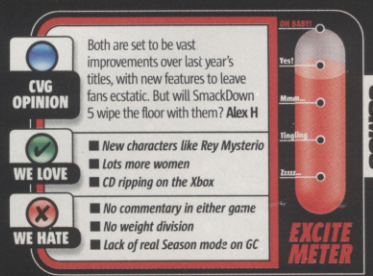
A NEW CHALLENGER!

The Internet forums demanded that Raw 2 should take advantage of the Xbox's ability to rip CDs, allowing for unlimited entrance music for Create-A-Wrestler characters. Anchor took note and that feature was one of the first in. Another is the Season mode, which was strangely absent last time out.

Raw 2's Season mode is quite revolutionary, allowing you to dictate how the Season unfolds. The computer chooses all the matches, taking into account who is feuding and who are allies. However, before the matches you choose if you want to interfere or if any other wrestlers should get involved. And by interacting in this way, you influence future storylines.

WrestleMania XIX also takes a different path. There's no traditional Season mode; instead you get something called Revenge. Here you pick a wrestler, who is then promptly thrown out of the WWE by boss Vince McMahon. Now you must fight your way back, by taking to the streets and completing a number of challenges, such as defeating five security guards in under 10 minutes. Will fans like it as much as a normal Season mode? Probably not, but it's better than nothing!

So those are the facts. Have you made up your mind as to who's the potential champ? Us neither! You'll just have to come back for the definitive reviews on both games soon... and that's the bottom line, because CVG said so!



WORLD SOCCER

Winning Eleven 7

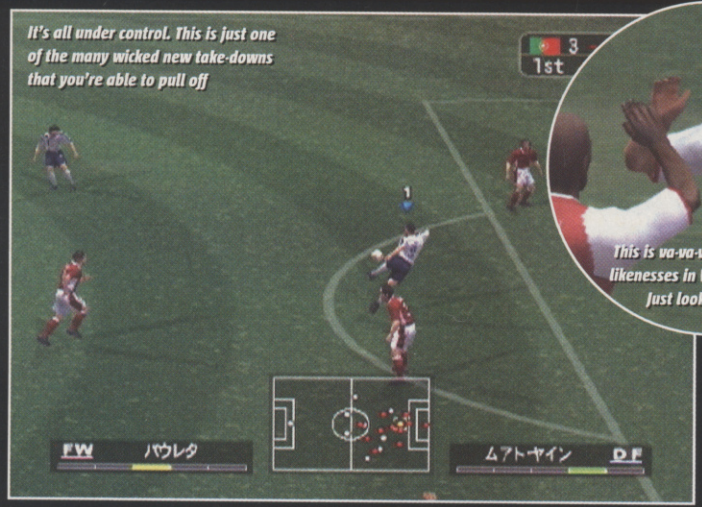
PUBLISHER
KONAMI
DEVELOPER
KCET
OUT: NOW

x8

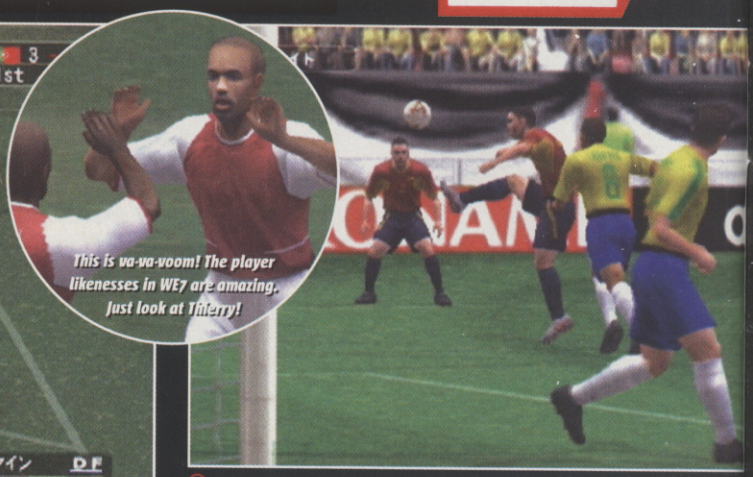
IN A NUTSHELL

Konami's latest effort establishes Winning Eleven/Pro Evo as the most legendary footie series ever. Improved on-pitch action, bags of new features and looks to die for! This is it!

WWW.KONAMITYO.COM



It's all under control. This is just one of the many wicked new take-downs that you're able to pull off


This is va-va-voom! The player likenesses in WE7 are amazing. Just look at Thierry!

Nobody likes a show-off, but who cares. You'll want to watch and rewatch your amazing goals in the swish new telly-style replays

Winning Eleven 6 Final Evolution is a frickin' masterpiece. Flawless, some would say. So when a copy of Winning Eleven 7 plopped onto CVG's doormat this month, we were scared. What if they'd messed it up? What if they'd tinkered with all the best stuff, tried to be too clever, and introduced daft things like that 'off-the-ball remote-player control' feature in FIFA 2004?

Here's the pinch. Konami *has* messed and tinkered with our beloved game like crazy. You can breathe easy, though, because once you get hands-on with WE7 you'll quickly realise that it's better. A lot better, and there's no going back.

PLAY LIKE A GOD, FEEL LIKE A GOD

Now anything's possible. If you want to score a certain type of goal and you're skilful enough, it will happen. When it does you feel like a master of the universe, and the way your players interact is so spontaneous that you can't help but live it like it's the real thing.

You have loads of instinctive new moves at your disposal. Outfox your opposite man with clever over-the-shoulder takedowns, swish step-overs, fancy new tricks, fakes and snappy manual passes. But this wouldn't mean squat if the players didn't bustle and battle each other as brilliantly as they do.

Now if you fall over your player doesn't just lay there like a sack of potatoes. These men have fire in their bellies! They ping up onto their feet so that you can get straight back in there to win the ball back.

There's heaps of shoulder-to-shoulder wrestling, a fair bit of shirt tugging, the manual R2 run is far more refined, and when the players clatter against one another the amazing animations make the action 100 per cent believable.

Beckham comes fully equipped with his famous girly headband

The action feels slightly faster than Winning Eleven 6 Final Evolution, and all the better for it

See that funny yellow icon in the top left of the screen? That appears when the ref plays advantage

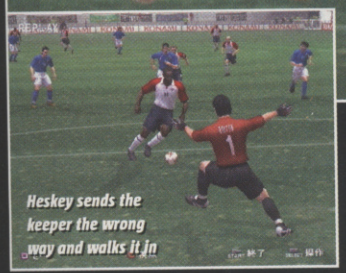
TWINKLE TOES

Dazzle the crowd with your fancy footwork. There's a handful of awesome new moves in Winning Eleven 7 that you can use to make the other team look stupid. Use them sparingly, though, or you'll become too predictable, and your mates will think you're a twit.

I'm spinning around, move out of my wa-ay! A swift semi-circular flick of the right stick and you'll perform this snazzy spin. This move also slightly changes your angle of run, depending on which direction you rotate the stick in, of course

The up-and-over. When a high ball comes in, control it, and when it bounces up turn in the opposite direction at precisely the right time and you will flick the ball over your head. This works brilliantly when you've got your back to a defender

Look at Cafu pulling on Raul's shirt! There's loads more jostling in this edition of Winning Eleven. You gotta be tough



Heskey sends the keeper the wrong way and walks it in

Switch injuries on or off. A bad knock can lead to bandaging, and players can even be seen wearing nose guards

You can really throw your weight around

Ronaldo gets caught doing the 360° spin trick

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BALL

It didn't seem possible but the ball physics have been tweaked to perfection. It bobbles loads more, and sometimes if you try to pull off a complicated move like the new 360° Zidane-style swivel, it'll ping away from your feet. Especially if the player on the ball doesn't have great dribbling stats.

Keepers make more realistic saves this time. Hit a belter and chances are they'll fumble it, or palm it away from the goalmouth leading to more follow-up attempts. As a result the action plays out more like a proper match.

Most of the set pieces remain the same, but throw-ins now call for you to move the player receiving the ball. Defenders can jostle with their opposite number, whereas throw-ins felt much more on rails before.

But don't harass your opponent too much, or the ref will blow for a free kick. That is unless there's the advantage to be played. When this happens a large yellow icon appears in the top corner of the screen to let both sides know. From what we've played of WE7 so far, and that's a lot, this new advantage feature works well, and the referees tends to get it right most of the time.

The only disappointment is the distinct lack of official kits and correct player names. We thought Konami would have taken the necessary steps to remedy this weakness. You can still edit the hell out of the teams, but that could take up weeks of your life.

Still, even without many officially licensed teams WE7 is set to become an all-time classic. Make sure you check into CVG next month for a full preview of the PAL version, Pro Evolution Soccer 3.

CVG OPINION

Despite the lack of official branding, WE7 is the best sports game we've ever played, and streets ahead of its footballing rivals. **Mike**

WE LOVE

- The overall feel of play is sublime
- The amazingly detailed new character models
- Heaps of tricks
- Downloadable online extras

WE HATE

- Not enough official team strips

EXCITE METER — OH BABY! — Yes! — Mmm... — Tingling — Zzzz... — CVG Games

NBA JAM

- PUBLISHER ACCLAIM
- DEVELOPER ACCLAIM
- OUT: OCTOBER
- ONLINE GAMING
- x6
- WWW.ACCLAIM.COM/GAMES

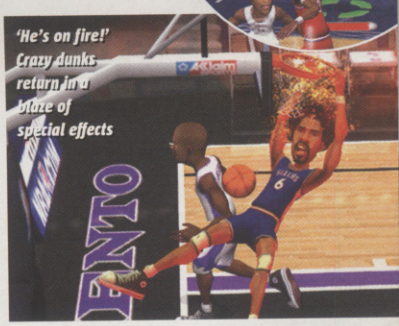
Acclaim's Jam basketball brand used to be the Kobe Bryant of console hoop-shooting. In fact, the combination of flawless basketball gameplay and 'bonkers' special attacks and moves, not to mention bizarre bighead modes and the like, made the series a winner.

So much so that EA borrowed many of its ideas for its recent and mega-successful NBA Street games. NBA Jam has been dusted off, spruced up and reckons its got the balls (ho ho) to square up to EA's games.

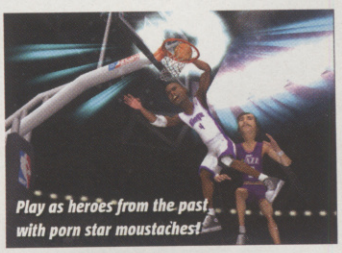
Played entirely on the court, as opposed to Street's urban locations, this should appeal to basketball purists and arcade action fans alike. There are historical players from the '50s to the '90s to play as, along with Create-A-Player modes and three-on-three multiplayer action.

NBA Jam is looking like being the last word for basketball fans hungry for court-based action.

We're surprised they can run so fast with heads so big



'He's on fire!' Crazy dunks return in a blaze of special effects



Play as heroes from the past with porn star moustaches!

WE LOVE

- A promising return to form
- Mix of 'proper' courtside stuff and special moves

WE HATE

- Of no interest to non-ballers
- Two NBA Street games already available

EXCITE METER — OH BABY! — Yes! — Mmm... — Tingling — Zzzz... — CVG Games

FINDING NEMO

■ PUBLISHER THQ
■ DEVELOPER TRAVELLER'S TALES
■ OUT: OCTOBER 3

GC XBOX GBA PC MAC

ONLINE GAMING

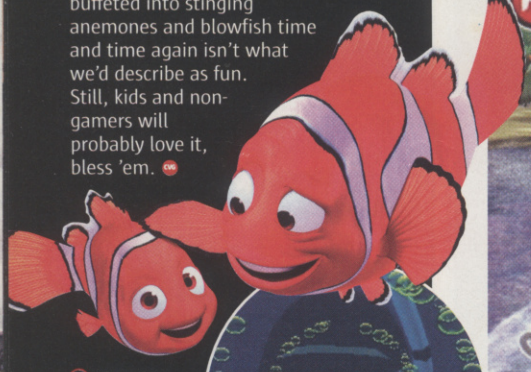
WWW.THQ.COM/FINDINGNEMO

Such is the appeal of Pixar's movie-making that anyone from age six to 60 can enjoy the films. THQ, it seems, wants to emulate that mass appeal with the videogame of Pixar's forthcoming Finding Nemo.

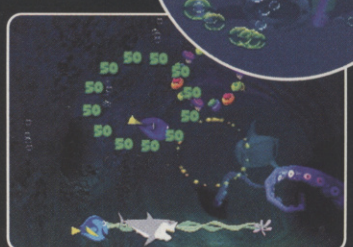
Trouble is, the game has been dumbed down so much that the action is never more demanding than swimming through rings or avoiding enemies' attack patterns.

It's not easy, though. In fact, for a title that is trying to be accessible to all players, whether skilled or not, the action gets pretty frustrating, even early on.

Fighting against currents and being buffeted into stinging anemones and blowfish time and time again isn't what we'd describe as fun. Still, kids and non-gamers will probably love it, bless 'em.



Chased by a deep sea diver – let's swim through more rings!



Swim through bonus rings for pointzzzzz...

WE LOVE
- High-quality DVD footage
- Excellent character models
- Lots of replay bonuses

WE HATE
- Tries to appeal to all and is over-simplified. It's mostly just swimming through hoops

EXCITE METER

ON RAILS
Yes!
Mmm...
Tingling
Zzzz...

GAMES

■ PUBLISHER THQ
■ DEVELOPER RAINBOW
■ OUT: SEPTEMBER

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

Ditching the realism of its predecessor, this one comes with much bigger waves and crazy themed courses. SplashDown 2 seeks to put the fun back into wearing rubber and getting wet with your mates.

WWW.THQ.COM/GAMES

SPLASHDOWN 2 Rides Gone Wild

Long-necked herbivorous dinos emerge from the swamp

Rusting shipwrecks turn up in Bermuda Blast

The extreme sports realism of the first SplashDown didn't quite float gamers' boats. Thankfully THQ has addressed this in the sequel, and then some.

BUOY, LOOKING GOOD!

The new animated look is a vast improvement and the fantasy settings keep the action fast and frenetic. Courses pan out like a dozen white-knuckle theme park rides rolled into one.

One minute you're sliding around ice walls and leaping off glaciers in Polar Plunge, while the next you could be in Cannonball Cove on a mission for secret shortcuts, nipping through holes the cannonballs have blasted in the wall. Stay alert to the changes in the levels as you play and you'll find all manner of ways to give the chasing pack the slip.

The handling of your sea-doo has also been tweaked. If you don't judge the waves right you'll bounce right off them and slam into the nearest wall. Dip your nose into a wave at the right moment and the water will give you a massive height and speed boost.

This promises to be a huge improvement on the original and the best way to race jet skis while avoiding unpleasant splashback.

Dinosaur legs make for some pretty substantial if unusual obstacles

Make sure you manoeuvre round the buoys on the correct side or you'll lose power

SEABOUND STUNTS

As well as making you look pretty damn impressive, the stunts are an integral part of the gameplay in SplashDown 2.

Every stunt you perform adds to your performance meter, which in turn increases your racer's top speed. So get practising.

Racking up combinations of stunts will increase your performance meter

The more spectacular the trick you can pull off, the bigger the boost you get

Things get a bit squashed in two-player

CVG OPINION

The fantasy settings have liberated the gameplay so that all sorts of wild and crazy races and stunts are now possible. Versus mode is fun too. **Paul A**

WE LOVE
- Big improvement looks-wise
- Changing, interactive courses
- Scope for crazy midair stunts

WE HATE
- The jet skis don't make any noise
- It's hard work learning each course's design

EXCITE METER

ON RAILS
Yes!
Mmm...
Tingling
Zzzz...

GAMES

YOU CANNOT BE SERIOUS!

Feeling a moody McEnroe moment coming on? Just as well that Top Spin lets you decide how your player reacts to the events of the game.

Gloat triumphantly or do a Rusedski and spout forth a foul-mouthed torrent of abuse. If you're Anna Kournikova you may just want to smile and look nice.

Teach your racket a lesson it won't forget in a hurry

Fire yourself up with a fiercely clenched fist

Or wag your finger 'threateningly' at your beaten opponent

TOP SPIN™

Neo's use of bullet time while playing did not impress the umpire one little bit

- PUBLISHER MICROSOFT
- DEVELOPER PAM STUDIOS
- OUT: NOVEMBER

ONLINE GAMING x4

IN A NUTSHELL

Microsoft serves up some online tennis action with the flagship game for its new Xbox Sports Network service. With 250 players, 50 venues and six game modes, Top Spin could well be the grand slam we've long been waiting for.

WWW.XBOX.COM/TOPSPIN/

We're huge fans of sports games here at CVG. Work is something that's done between Pro Evo sessions. As well as some fantastic multiplayer action they also make us feel that our pale, feeble bodies are getting something close to exercise.

Pro Evo rules the roost right now, but the release of Top Spin might change that. If Virtua Tennis set the standard for multiplayer tennis games Top Spin should blast that standard with a 150mph service.

Not only does it support multiplayer madness for you and your mates, it's also Live-enabled and the first game to use Microsoft's XSN service.

NO POSERS ALLOWED

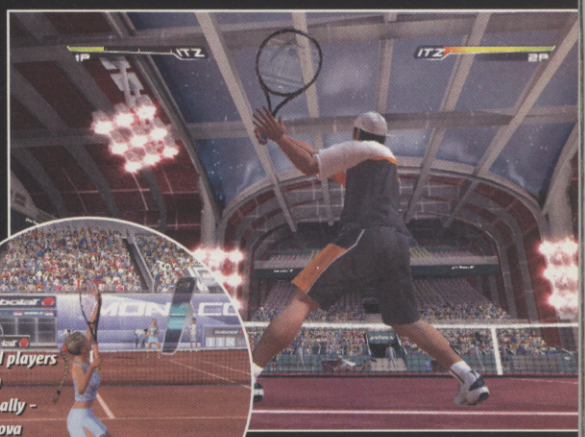
It'll be just like a real tennis club, but presumably without the elitism and show-off pros. On top of that, Top Spin plays a cracking game of tennis.

Though reminiscent of the former top-seed Virtua Tennis, its control system and greater tactical depth promise a much more involving and realistic recreation of the sport. You'll be able to create your own player and embark on a pro career, starting on the street courts and working your way up to the grand slams.

There are 16 licensed players, all accurately modelled and motion captured, so Lleyton Hewitt's legs fly off the ground on his backhand and you can see the stubble on grizzly Pete Sampras's face.

The visuals are really special too, with the venues and players looking great.

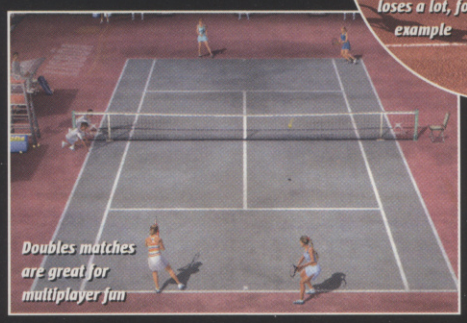
With all this – and the presence of everyone's favourite underachiever Anna Kournikova – Top Spin should serve up an ace come November. CVG



Licensed players perform realistically – Kournikova loses a lot, for example

The detail in the player models and venues is staggering

Tournaments aren't licensed, but you won't notice the difference



Doubles matches are great for multiplayer fun

Different play surfaces affect the ball uniquely and require different styles of play

Create a player that looks just like you, or make him attractive instead

Venues range from scabby street courts to huge fancy stadiums

CVG OPINION

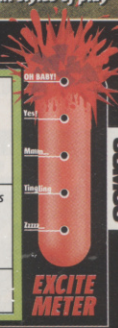
An exciting combination of arcade sensibilities with the depth and strategy of a more intricate sports simulation. We can't wait to net it. **Graeme**

WE LOVE

- *Easy to pick up and play but lots of depth underneath*
- *Better-looking than Anna K*
- *Lets you throw a wobbly*

WE HATE

- *Tennis is naturally repetitive*
- *It's just not football, is it?*



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31985 David Sneddon, Best Of Order
32631 R. Kelly ft. Big Tigger, Snake
32644 Kings Of Leon, Chambers
32445 Jaimeson, Complete
31987 Blu Cantrell ft. S.Paul, Breathe
32413 Cheeky Girls, Cheeky Holiday
32426 M.Owen, Four Minute Warning
32425 Lumidee, Never Leave You
32419 Pharrell ft. Method, Frontin'
32373 R.William, Something Beautiful
32346 D.Bedingfield, Never Gonna
32564 Jason Nevins, I'm In Heaven
31254 Beyonce. JayZ, Crazy In Love
32449 Benny Benassi, Satisfaction
31259 Evanescene, Bring Me To Life
32416 Craig David, Spanish
32422 Kosheen, All In My Head
32424 Deepest Blue, Deepest Blue
32009 Stereophonics, Maybe
32583 Elbow, Fallen Angel
31285 K.Rowland, Train On Track
31258 Fast Food Rockers, Fast Food
31328 Pink, Feel Good Time
32444 Lisa Maffia, In Love
32369 Javine, Real Things
31318 Eminem, Business
32563 All American Rejects, Swing
25105 21 Questions
25095 Overload
31293 Delta Goodrem, Without You
31998 Misteeq, Can't Get It Back
32430 Joe Budden, Pump It Up
32345 Triple8, Give Me A Reason
32626 Funeral For A Friend, Juneau
32386 D-Side, Invisible
32375 Junior Senior, Rhythm Bandits
32609 O. Osbourne, Close My Eyes
32448 Dido, White Flag
32496 The Cardigans, The Storm
32421 Macy Gray, She Aint Right...
32402 Madonna, Frozen
32399 Dido, Take My Hand
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32306 S Club, Do It Til We Drop
32303 S Club, ..From The Heart
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23262 Six Feet Under
23265 Southpark, Kyles Mom
23268 Star Wars
23269 Terminator Theme
25198 Top Gun
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23006 DJ Otzi, Hey Baby
23008 Dj Quicksilver, Bellissima
23009 DJ Sammy, Boys Summer
23010 Eiffel 65, Blue
23011 Energy 52, Cafe Del Mar
23014 I.Van Dhl, Castles In Sky
23016 Jakata ft. Seal, My Vision
23018 J.Vries, The Opera Song
23019 Lasgo, Alone
23020 Layo, Love Story
23024 N-Trance, Set U Free
23028 Robert Miles, Childen
23029 Royksop, Poor Leno
23030 Rui Da Silva, Touch Me
23032 Scooter, Posse
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23035 Underworld, Born Slippy
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13028 Gremlins
13188 He-Man
13247 Lazy Jones
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13275 Mario World, Intro
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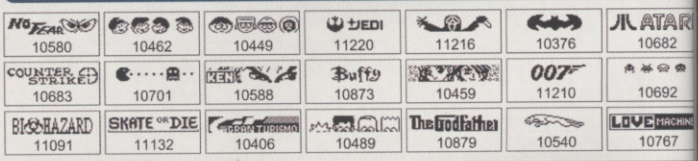
13278 Sonic, Hill Zone
13280 Soul Edge, Edge Master
13254 Street Fighter II, Title
13228 Tetris
13134 Wonderboy
13288 Zelda 2, Intro

VERTICALS

OPERATOR LOGOS



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STAR WARS REBEL STRIKE ROGUE SQUADRON III

PUBLISHER
ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER
FACTOR 5
OUT: SEPTEMBER

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

Rogue Leader is the most successful third-party GameCube game to date. Not for long. Rebel Strike is attacking from all sides and is sure to shoot its way to the top spot with this all-round stunning effort.

WWW.LUCASARTS.COM/PRODUCTS/REBELSTRIKE

Although the ground-level action steals the show, the aerial combat is still totally mental

There's a hilarious movie doing the rounds on the Web of a boy known only as The Star Wars Kid. The uncoordinated tithead privately filmed himself going bananas with a double-ended lightsaber, or broom as it's known in the real world.

So why did he make such a fanny of himself? Easy. He wanted to experience the rush of being a Jedi! If only he knew, there is an easier way...

Rebel Strike promises to bring GameCube owners the ultimate Star Wars arcade sensation. Unlike Rogue Leader, which only let us see the action from the skies, in Rebel Strike you're free to experience on-foot lightsaber battles, shoot-outs and stacks of other ground-fighting scenarios.

A pair of angry AT-STs square up for a rumble in the jungle

OUT IN THE COLD

One of the 13 new missions takes place back on Hoth. But this time you're out of your Snow Speeder and sprinting through the snow in what's easily one of the most furious and awesome-looking Star Wars battlefields yet.

Again, one of the objectives is to destroy a troop of AT-ATs. But this time it's a lot more dangerous. They're way over in the distance and a unit of AT-STs and Storm Troopers are closing in on your position.

You spot a Tauntaun, run over to it, gunning down as many enemies as you can on the way. You and your trusty steed gallop over to the giant four-legged metal monsters. A well-placed shot with the grappling hook and you zip-line up into its belly before filleting its insides with your lightsaber.

THE FORCE IS STRONG

It's this freedom and variety that really makes Rebel Strike so exciting. Plus this time you can choose to take multiple paths through the adventure, either as Luke Skywalker, Wedge Antilles or Han Solo.

Add to this all the new multiplayer options, mental Speeder Bike chases and real movie footage cutscenes, and you have what could be the most well-rounded and explosive arcade Star Wars experience ever. CVG

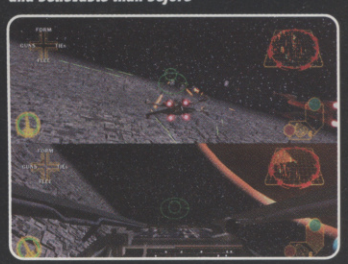
WINGING IT

An enraged Star Wars geek is not a pretty sight. Frustrated fans of the previous game complained about the lack of multiplayer action, so in order to avoid a full-scale rebellion LucasArts and developer Factor 5 have made amends.

Rebel Strike introduces head-to-head multiplayer options including Capture The Base, Endurance and deathmatch-style dogfights. But it's the co-op mode that will have fans really super-excited; this allows you and a mate to play through the entire Rogue Leader game side by side.

Replay the entire Rogue Leader adventure in an enhanced split-screen two-player co-op adventure

The environments are even more detailed and believable than before

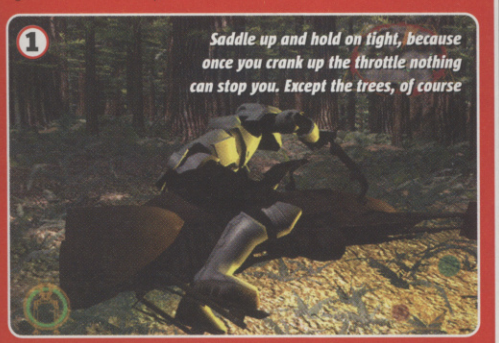


Get down to some dirty dogfighting action in a tense two-player face-off

JUNGLE DRAG RACE

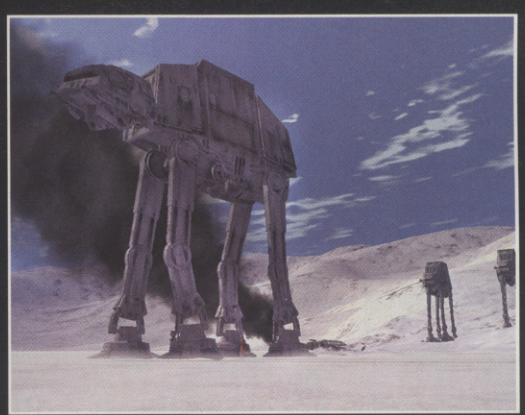
The Speeder Bike action will turn you into a nervous gibbering wreck.

It really does play as fast as the chase sequences in Return Of The Jedi. Especially when you switch from the third- to first-person view, because you only ever have a split-second to swing your bike out of harm's way. And all the while you're engaged in laser-crazy fights with Scout Troopers. Insane.

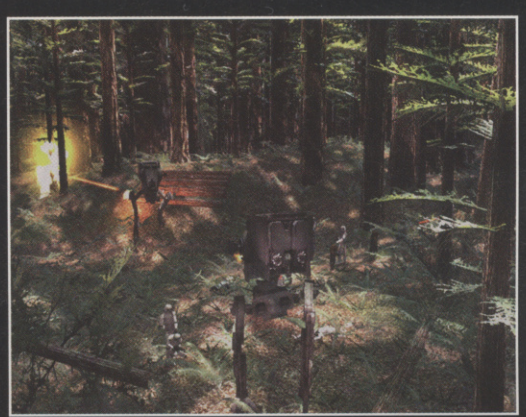


1 Saddle up and hold on tight, because once you crank up the throttle nothing can stop you. Except the trees, of course

2 When Mother Nature meets F-Zero: switch to the over-the-handlebars viewpoint for a pant-filling sensation of speed



Taking out an AT-AT on foot is a mighty task. You'll need a grappling hook, a lightsaber and balls the size of Jawas



CVG OPINION

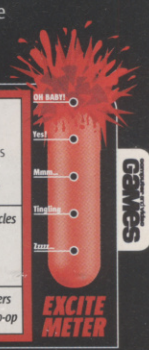
A white-knuckle intergalactic blinder that promises to take Rogue Squadron fans to places they only ever dreamed of visiting in Rogue Leader. **Mike**

WE LOVE

- Run around or drive land vehicles
- You can ride a Tauntaun
- Conflicts are more intense
- New multiplayer options

WE HATE

- A handful of playable characters
- Rebel Strike missions aren't co-op



The Simpsons HIT & RUN

Stop the traffic then commandeer another vehicle if your own car is busted

Bart does a bit of exploring in Moe's Tavern, possibly looking for a hidden whale?

- PUBLISHER: VIVENDI
- DEVELOPER: RADICAL ENTERTAINMENT
- OUT: NOVEMBER 7

ONLINE GAMING | x4

IN A NUTSHELL

Simpsons fun as you run and drive around the whole of Springfield, raise havoc and thwart aliens in this spin-off of the 'anything goes' Treehouse Of Horror Halloween Specials.

XBOX GC PC

WWW.VUGAMES.COM

For possibly the biggest, longest-running show from Earth to Omicron Persei Eight, it's surprising that there haven't been a zillion more licensed videogames clogging the shelves than the few Simpsons titles already released.

Given the quality of past Simpsons games, we're thankful for this. However, with a new publisher and developer, who have possibly more than just a quick buck in mind, Hit & Run could easily be the best Simpsons game yet.

OKAY, IT'S NO GTA

Like Bart's beloved Squishee drinks, Hit & Run combines an odd blend of ingredients. Gameplay styles merge and mingle, some more successfully than others. At its most basic level, you could describe the action as 'The Simpsons do Grand Theft Auto', but on extended play this comparison isn't wholly accurate.

Yes, you can roam freely, beat up folks for fun and then carjack a getaway vehicle when the police come chasing after you. But what's missing is the free-roaming, go anywhere, do anything open-endedness of the GTA games.

In its place is a set of missions within a very linear main story, along with a bunch of secret areas to explore and races to win to earn bonus coins and goodies. There's also a noticeable lack of shooting in the streets!

The gameplay balance between driving and on-foot exploration and platforming is about 70-30 in favour of the driving. The on-foot sections are currently the weakest, especially where precise jumping is involved.

Making up for this is the way you can explore many of Springfield's famous buildings like Moe's Tavern and Springfield Elementary. Plus, the bags of humour and neat authentic touches will help make any shortcomings in the final version easier to overlook, but only because it's The Simpsons.

Benign areas you visited before turn progressively more evil

Spectacular crashes are your reward for launching off ramps

You'd think Bart would have learnt not to tamper with Jebediah by now

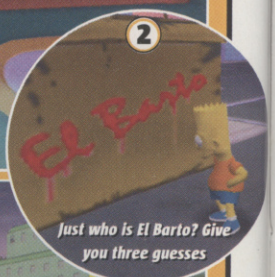
Milhouse Van Houten is no less deserving of abuse in digital form

The Stonecutters Secret Tunnel leads into the depths of the power plant

AND YOU WERE THERE, AND YOU WERE THERE...

The hook of any Simpsons game – even the ones that stink worse than a cacky nappy in a microwave oven – is the ability to live the TV show and explore Springfield.

Even better is when there are lots of cool in-jokes and references. This is what Hit & Run does best at the moment. See if you can spot the references here.



CVG OPINION

Universal love of the show will probably help this appear more enjoyable than it may actually be, but it's still heaps better than any other Simpsons game. **Lee**

WE LOVE

- References to past episodes
- Pretty funny exploring the town
- Feels quite freeform

WE HATE

- Platform sections quite weak
- The game dictates when you change character and setting

GAMES

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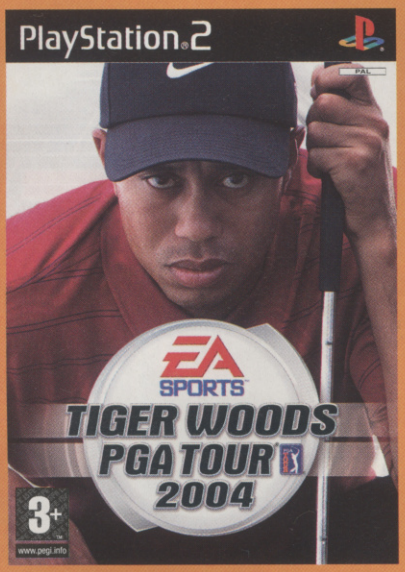

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR® 2004

Release Date: 26 September 2003

Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 2004 is the most comprehensive and most competitive golf game available. Build the ultimate golfer to take on the TOUR and dominate the world. Seven new courses have been added for a total of 19, including more than 10 of the world's most prestigious.

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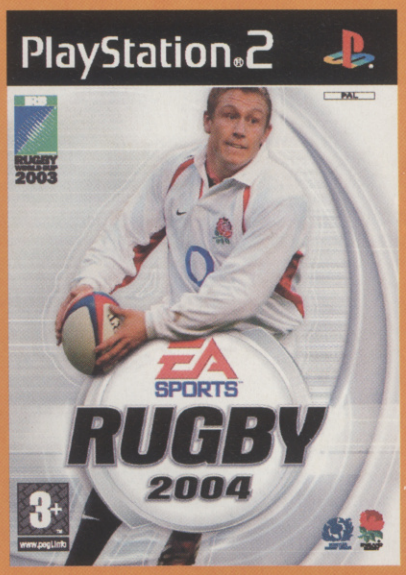

RUGBY 2004

Release Date: 19 September 2003

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"FREEZE, MOFOS!!"

EyeToy, dance mats, train controllers... making a tit of yourself in public is part of every day gaming life. But a new kind of public humiliation is coming your way. And worst of all, you're going to love it so much you'll willingly submit yourself to ridicule.

Yes, thanks to the power of voice recognition software and headsets with microphones, you'll be getting arrested by real SWAT teams because your elderly neighbour thought it was him you were yelling at to "get down on the floor, you mutha^@£@$£!!"

Of course, headset communication between players has been around in PC games for years and Microsoft's Game Voice software lets you press keys by voice command, but it's fiddly to set up, not widely used and doesn't communicate directly with the game AI itself, and few titles have tried to build such software into the game code itself.

So it has been left to consoles to now show the gaming masses the true potential of voice command, with its implementation in SWAT, Rainbow Six and SOCOM 2 set to be far more impressive than earlier efforts like SOCOM 1 and Brute Force.

PUBLISHER VIVENDI UNIVERSAL
DEVELOPER ARGONAUT GAMES
OUT: OCTOBER TBC
ONLINE GAMING x4

IN A NUTSHELL

It's got itself a new developer, new game engine and new technology. Yep, what we have here is a new SWAT – the PC first-person tactical simulation series that's come over all Virtua Cop for console.

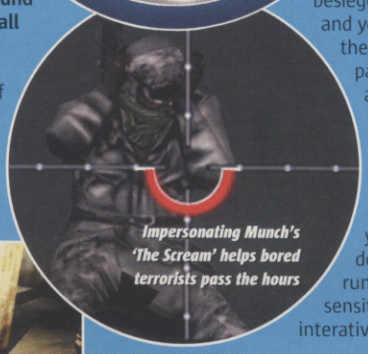
WWW.ARGONAUT.COM

VOICE GAME #1

SWAT GLOBAL STRIKE TEAM

Doing real police SWAT training sounds fun, but as one of Argonaut's guys found out researching GST, one small arse-up and you can land in hospital for six months.

Imagine the videogame of that – fail the training mission and the game locks you out until Christmas. It'd be more annoying than the garage level on Driver.



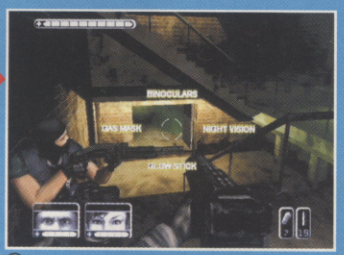
Impersonating Munch's 'The Scream' helps bored terrorists pass the hours

Which might explain why Argonaut has binned the PC series' simulation approach for console and given us something that plays a lot closer to how SWAT policework looks on the telly shows – barrel through besieged buildings, kicking in doors and yelling "Down!" so loud that the windows rattle, barely pausing to order your team about. Now *that's* fun.

TWAT-TED

Voice recognition adds a new dimension to SWAT, but it's still a fast-moving game if you just use the pad. You don't have to worry about running out of ammo, context-sensitive menus pop up making interative objects easy to use and

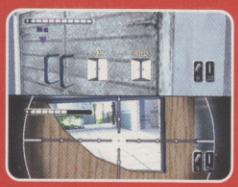
Man on his knees in a Tube toilet... surely not



Do the job well for SWAT medals. Also unlock special dark medals for psycho behaviour

SPLITTING BLOOD

Halo proved just how much fun co-op can add to the one-player package, so it's surprising how few times it's been done well in the year-and-a-half since. SWAT aims to improve that strike rate...



SWAT's 10 split-screen co-op missions include a Time Attack mode. An limited Continues system means it's a good idea not to partner with a total loser

Co-op's plot spins off from the single-player's. Levels are different, less linear so you can split up and take overlapping routes to give each other cover

SWAT'S THAT?

Argonaut keeps it simple, offering a total of almost 20 types of command (for your team, enemies or NPCs) but with several words for each.

At the start of the game, you read all the command words aloud and an audio bar tells you how close the match is. Meaning that if several words for the same command are recognised, then you have a choice of what to shout to get the same reaction.

It even allows for British and American accents. From what we've seen so far it works well, though we suspect someone with a strong Brummie accent might as well play the Spanish version. Even we can't understand them. "Snoy-ee-paah!"

The start of the game

Speak English here...

...to see how many words are recognised

ZULU JULU

Rainbow Six's commands are all directed at your own team, but there are over 40 letting you issue subtly varied 'on the fly' tactical orders.

Hit the Y button to activate voice recognition and bellow your order and your three-man team will do as instructed. So long as you are looking at interactive items like doors and enemies (you can use binoculars to pinpoint this) you don't even need to call up a menu. Magic!

Several commands let you pre-plan tactical moves

Trigger attacks by shouting the word 'Zulu'

PUBLISHER UBI SOFT
DEVELOPER RED STORM
OUT: NOV 14
ONLINE GAMING x16

IN A NUTSHELL

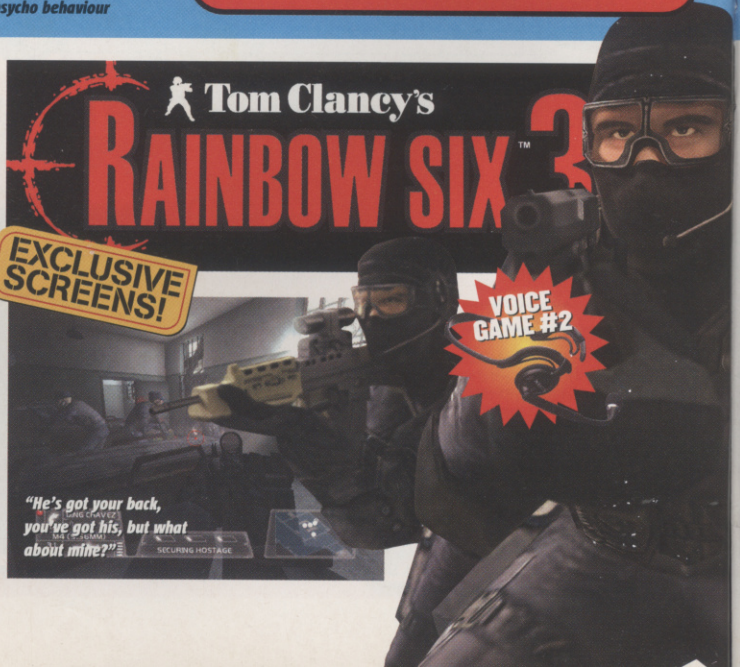
Team-based first-person shooter using the Unreal engine. Shares some content from quality PC hit Raven Shield, but it's essentially an all-new game designed for console and using voice recognition.

WWW.UBISOFT.COM

Tom Clancy's RAINBOW SIX 3

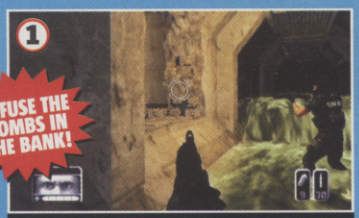
EXCLUSIVE SCREENS!

VOICE GAME #2

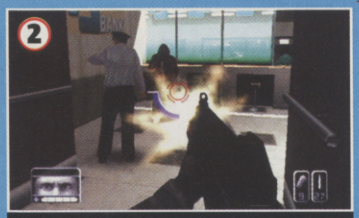


HOW TO FAIL A MISSION PARTS I & II

Levels are fairly linear, but there's some random spawning and scripting. A few scenarios also turn out to be a bit trickier than they look...



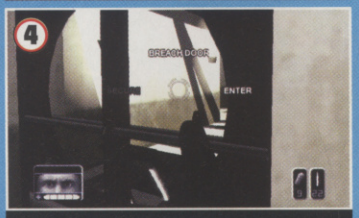
Your point of entry: the sewers. Oh sh*t...



Blast the blagger and save the guard

You give cover while he defuses the bomb

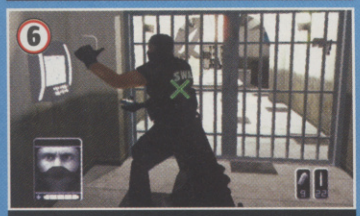
Even the cops get cuffed, just in case



Tell your man to blow the door down

Head-spinning double vision from the blast

Later, Flash Bangs disorientate enemies...



TJ signals that the gate's now unlocked

That's one prime suspect in the bag. Upgrade!

You CAN order TJ to go under the motion sensor

And YOU if you get too close

team management has been kept very simple.

Some of GST's most stand-out features come from staying broadly faithful to the basic principles of SWAT – as the good guy you're not *meant* to cap everyone. All your enemies have Compliance bars, and sometimes you can intimidate them into giving up by yelling at them or firing nearby.

Once you've cuffed them you can still kill them, but, besides your main objectives (rescue hostages, and so on), you are also given Rules of Engagement which indicate how far you can push it. Capturing prime suspects alive also lets you upgrade your weapons.

All of which means Global Strike Team lets you play it as you want to – by the book or CVG-style. Dirty!

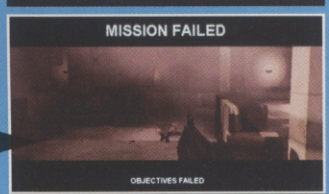
If that hostage looks suspicous to you

You could order him to get "Dooown!"

Oops. Forgot the motion sensor

More bloody hostages. Sod it. Take that

Oops, that's another motion-sensitive bomb



Bugger. Back to the last save point

CVG OPINION

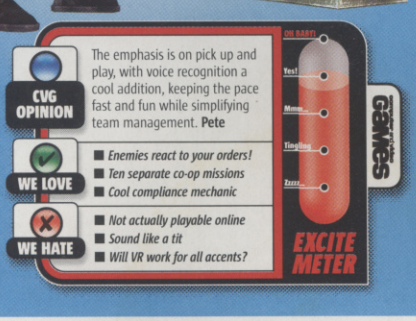
The emphasis is on pick up and play, with voice recognition a cool addition, keeping the pace fast and fun while simplifying team management. **Pete**

WE LOVE

- Enemies react to your orders!
- Ten separate co-op missions
- Cool compliance mechanic

WE HATE

- Not actually playable online
- Sound like a tit
- Will VR work for all accents?



LOADS OF GADGETS AND GAMEPLAY MECHANICS HELP YOU HANDLE TACTICAL SCENARIOS. NIGHT VISION'S INVALUABLE FOR SPOTTING HIDDEN ENEMIES IN DARK CORRIDORS, ZOOM FOR DISTANT SNIPING AND LEANING AROUND CORNERS TO SHOOT FROM COVER. YOU CAN EVEN PARTIALLY OPEN DOORS TO SNEAK A LOOK OR LOB A GRENADE

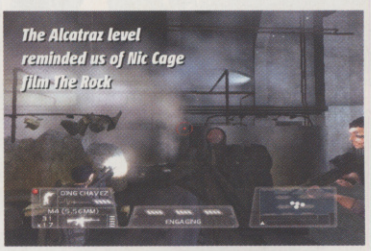
BLAT! VOICE RECOGNITION MAKES ORDERING YOUR TEAM AROUND EASIER, BUT WHILE THERE ARE OVER 40 VOICE COMMANDS TO LEARN, RAINBOW SIX REALLY DOESN'T TAKE LONG TO PICK UP. YOU CAN'T SWITCH TEAM MEMBERS, THERE'S NO PRE-PLANNING AND YOUR TEAM AI SEEMS TO BE SMART ENOUGH TO TAKE A LOT OF THE HASSLE OUT OF COORDINATING ATTACKS

AUTHOR TOM CLANCY HIMSELF APPROVED THE NEW PLOT SCENARIO, WHICH SEES TEAM RAINBOW CALLED IN DURING THE RUN-UP TO A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION TO PROTECT VENEZUELAN AND AMERICAN OIL INTERESTS AMID A WAVE OF TERRORIST BOMBINGS

IF YOU PLAYED RAVEN SHIELD ON PC EARLIER THIS YEAR AND ARE WORRIED ABOUT INSANE DIFFICULTY LEVELS, CHILL. XBOX'S GAME ISN'T ONE-SHOT, ONE-KILL, SO YOU CAN TAKE A FEW WOUNDS, AND THERE'S EVEN SOME AUTO-AIM HELP. THE OUTER RIM OF THE RETICULE LETS YOU KNOW WHEN THIS KICKS IN, WHICH IS A BIT HANDY

AW, LOOK AT THE PWEDDY LIGHTS. RAINBOW SIX 3 MAKES GOOD USE OF EPIC'S UNREAL ENGINE, WITH DIFFERENT VISION MODES, HEAT BLUR AND NEW LIGHTING AND SHADOW EFFECTS, ALL MAKING FOR A MORE IMMERSIVE, TENSER ATMOSPHERE. THESE EXCLUSIVE SCREENSHOTS SHOW TERRAIN VARYING FROM ALCATRAZ, TO AN OIL REFINERY TO A MISTY ALPINE BASE

RED STORM USED A REAL-LIFE TACTICAL EXPERT TO ENSURE ACCURACY. BUT IF YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR AI TEAM, THE 14 ONE-PLAYER MISSIONS CAN ALSO BE PLAYED WITH THREE MATES. THEY CAN EVEN BE PLAYED IN BOTH MISSION AND TERRORIST HUNT MODES


The Alcatraz level reminded us of Nic Cage film The Rock

CVG OPINION

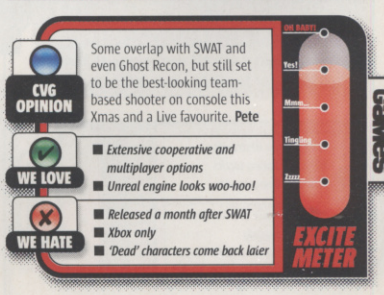
Some overlap with SWAT and even Ghost Recon, but still set to be the best-looking team-based shooter on console this Xmas and a Live favourite. **Pete**

WE LOVE

- Extensive cooperative and multiplayer options
- Unreal engine looks woo-hoo!

WE HATE

- Released a month after SWAT
- Xbox only
- 'Dead' characters come back later



Fiery destruction is what Route 66 is all about, whether it's buildings or vehicles

The King of Route 66

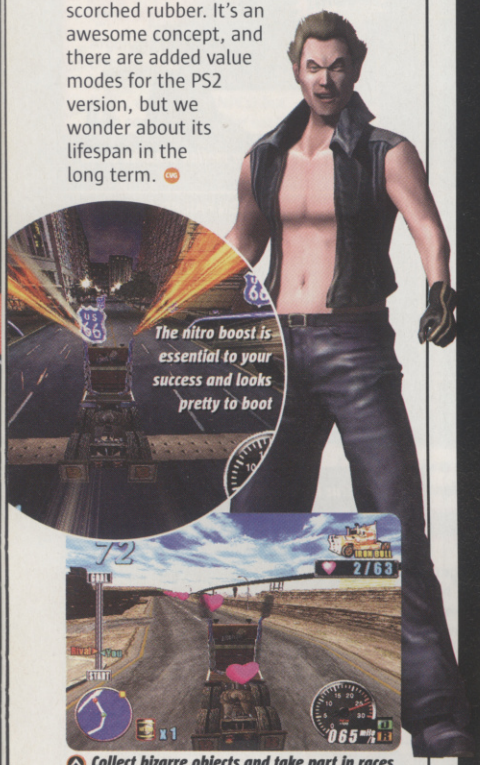
ROUTE US 66

- PUBLISHER: SEGA
- DEVELOPER: SEGA
- OUT: SEPTEMBER
- ONLINE GAMING
- WWW.SEGA-EUROPE.COM

Ride roughshod across America's backbone – the famous Route 66. Thankfully this conversion of the gigantic arcade cabinet is rather more fun than real-life truckin'.

Each stage in the main game is a short but sweet race to your objective. The cool twist is that you can never drive as fast as your rival, so you must employ some downright dirty cheating tricks in order to win.

Bully opponents into oncoming traffic, take shortcuts through buildings and make insane nitro-assisted jumps to fly above them before crashing down to the tarmac in a shower of glass and scorched rubber. It's an awesome concept, and there are added value modes for the PS2 version, but we wonder about its lifespan in the long term.



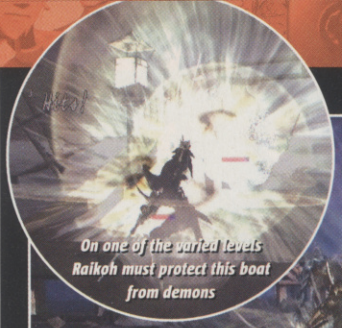
Collect bizarre objects and take part in races in The Queen Of Route 66 mode, girlie boy

WE LOVE
- Maximum destruction
- Sneaky racing tactics
- Loads of new modes

WE HATE
- Missions are over too fast
- Lots of loading
- Probably not much longevity

EXCITE METER: Oh Baby! / Yes! / Mmm... / Tingling... / Zzzz...

CVG GAMES



On one of the varied levels Raikoh must protect this boat from demons

The enemies are unlike anything we've seen and attack in huge numbers

OTOGI: MYTH OF DEMONS

- PUBLISHER: SEGA
- DEVELOPER: FROM SOFTWARE
- OUT: SEPTEMBER
- ONLINE GAMING
- XBOX
- WWW.SEGA-EUROPE.COM

IN A NUTSHELL

Ultra-stylish demon slaying in a heart-breakingly beautiful world. Slash, swipe and spell your way through 29 varied levels, which are based on real-life ancient Japanese folklore stories and historical culture.

You know the girl in school that everyone fancies? Otogi is that girl. Looking at it is like having your eyeballs massaged by tiny kittens with really soft paws.

See, this is more than just a game. It's artistic, philosophical, cultured and clever. It's the story of Raikoh, an undead warrior granted a body of flesh and bones so he can kick some demon ass and restore light to the world.

Demons being demons, they've trapped the four elements that keep the Earth in equilibrium and it's up to you to let them flow free in a slash-em-up third-person stylee.

HIT OR MYTH

So far, so Devil May Cry, we hear you say. But wait, you've obviously been neglecting your Japanese mythology studies.

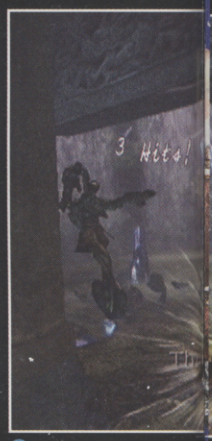
Otogi is derived entirely from genuine folklore and mysticism so at least you can say you're learning about other cultures while you play. And learning should be a lot of fun. There are loads of different demons to slice to ribbons and they're all much more imaginative than the usual game goons.

The control system seems brilliantly simple too, making leaping around, beating up evil and then dashing away look, and feel, totally stylish. Even better than this, you can wallop demons through the scenery and leave huge craters in your wake.

If you don't want to rely totally on your sword you can unleash some impressive-looking magic, which ranges from some blue butterflies fluttering about to a massive red dragon that'll chase down your foes.

Otogi's like some amazing mystical pie, encased in delicious fluffy pastry with a satisfying, tasty filling. We're looking forward to chowing down in September.

Raikoh goes head-to-head with the Master. Wait till you see this thing moving...



Unleashing a furious flurry of sword swipes on multiple enemies feels great

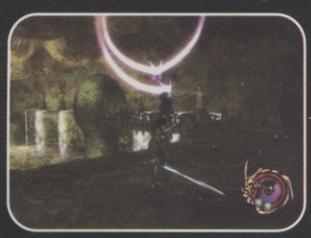
IT'S A KIND OF MAGIC

Raikoh is well handy with a blade, but he can also pull a rabbit out of a hat.

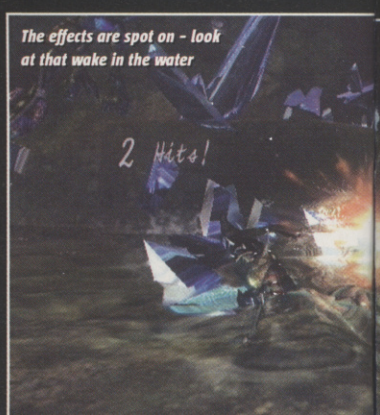
Or at least bombard evil demons with your blazing lightning bolts of magic. Beat this, David Blaine.

Phoenix magic sends a massive fiery bird straight at the nearest demon

Rain lightning down upon multiple nearby enemies with the Chimera magic

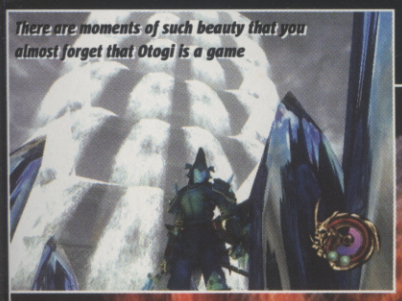


Let loose some flaming blue dragons and watch them run riot



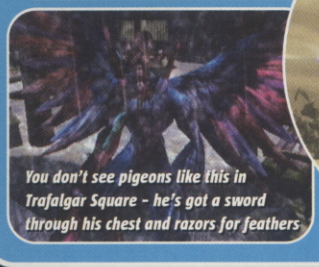
The effects are spot on – look at that wake in the water

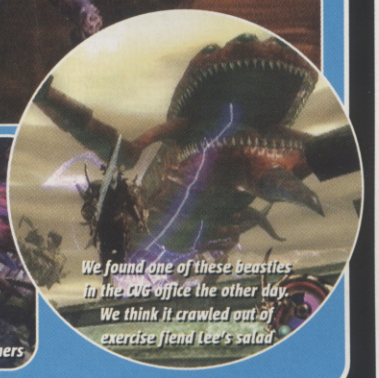
Send deserving demons who dare to get in your way tumbling through the destructible scenery



LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT THING

Otogi draws its demons from Japanese folklore and the bosses are some of the biggest and nastiest we've seen for a while. Check out these critters...





These dudes are harder than Brighton rock. Target their weak spot

Lock the camera onto an enemy with the left trigger

- PUBLISHER SONY
- DEVELOPER NAMCO
- OUT: OCTOBER

ONLINE GAMING

WWW.NAMCOARCADE.COM

Tick tock, tick tock. Time is running out for the Time Crisis series. With free-roaming gun games like Resi Dead Aim and innovative new blasters such as Starsky & Hutch, which sees you driving and shooting simultaneously, the days of simple pop-out-and-shoot gameplay could well be numbered.

And sadly that's all Time Crisis 3 promises to offer when it hits stores in October. The game already looks and feels dated. The action is almost identical to that in Time Crisis 2 and you will be hard-pressed to spot any improvements in the visuals even though its predecessor is now almost two years old.

The only noticeable addition to the series is that you can now hold a number of weapons simultaneously and switch between them at any time. That's it. And although all the explosive action set pieces have been stylishly done, they're scarily similar to those of the last game. CVG

Duck for cover, unless you fancy being flambéed

CVG OPINION

With a beautiful mixture of magic, sword-swiping and demon-slaying, Otogi is fantastic to look at and should be even better to play. **Graeme**

WE LOVE
- Eye-meltingly beautiful
- Simple, intuitive controls
- Destructible scenery

WE HATE
- Possibly a bit too short
- The role-playing elements seem superfluous

EXCITE METER

OH BABY!
Yes!
Mmm...
Tingling
Zzzzz...

GAMES

WE LOVE
- Blasting the crap out of anything that moves

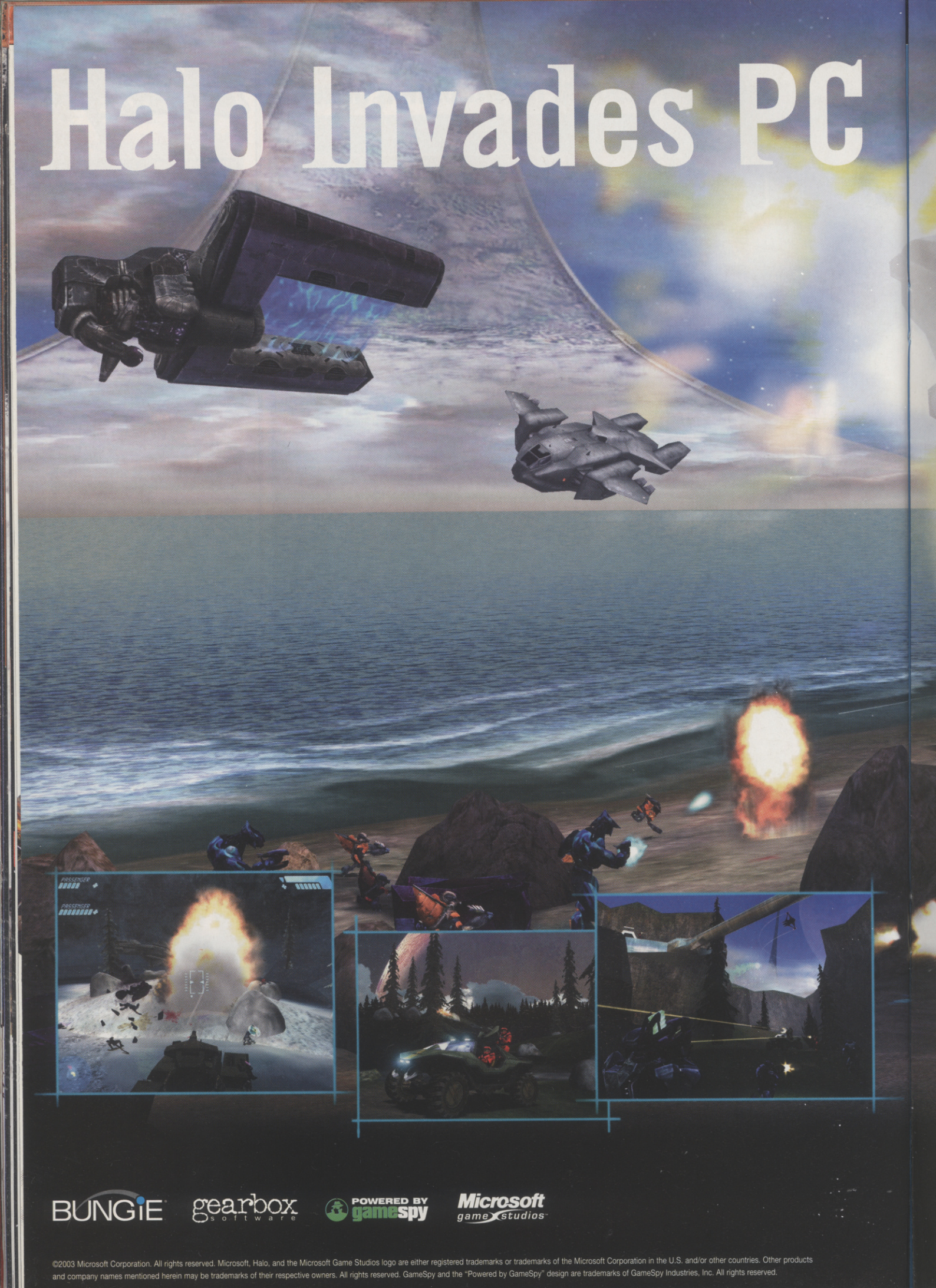
WE HATE
- Tired old gun game formula
- Mediocre graphics
- Unoriginal set pieces
- Uninspired enemies

EXCITE METER

OH BABY!
Yes!
Mmm...
Tingling
Zzzzz...

GAMES

Halo Invades PC



BUNGiE gearbox software POWERED BY gamespy Microsoft game studios

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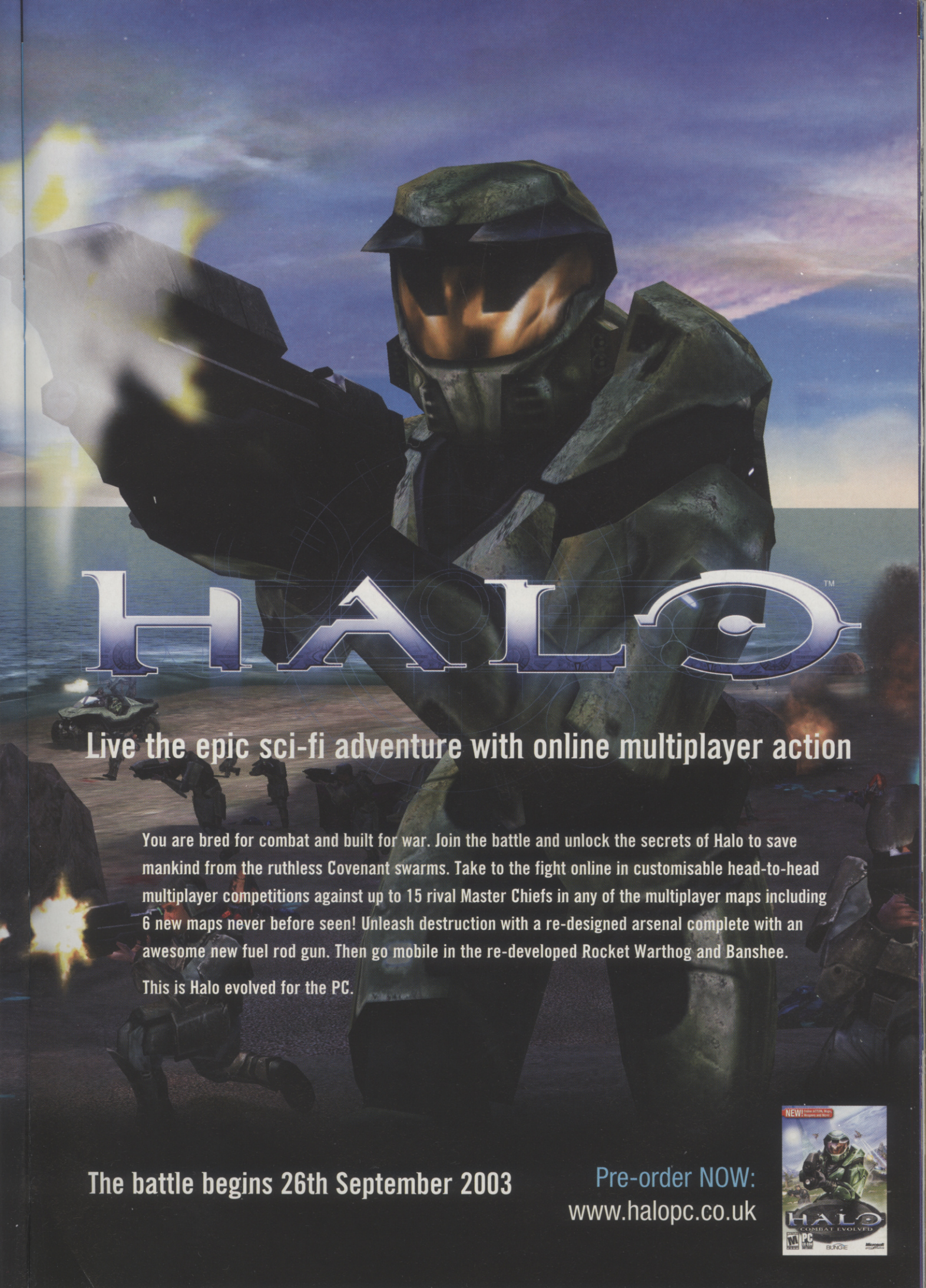
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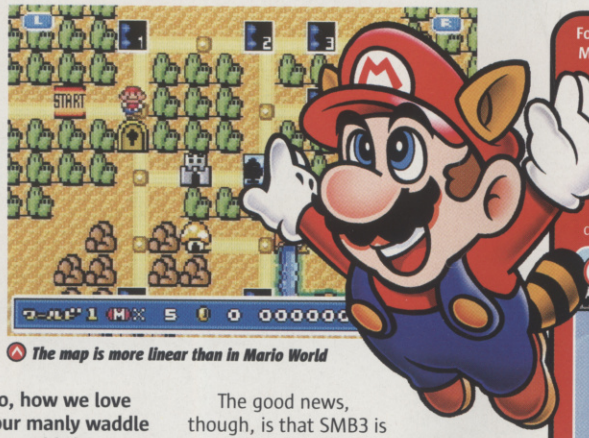
SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 4: SUPER MARIO BROS 3

■ PUBLISHER
NINTENDO
■ DEVELOPER
NINTENDO
■ OUT: OCTOBER

IN A NUTSHELL

Mario's fourth GBA adventure sees the classic Super Mario Bros 3 being given the re-release treatment. Treats in store include the innovative e-reader attachment, which should go some way towards freshening up this 15-year-old game.

WWW.NINTENDO.CO.UK



The map is more linear than in Mario World

Ah, sweet Mario, how we love thee – with your manly waddle and moustache that would shame any Seventies porn star. How we bow at your feet as innovation bursts forth from your big gameplay pipe with your every new iteration.

But hark! What is this? A steaming new slice of your platforming goodness, freshly served like scintillating GBA pie?

TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING?

Mario's back, but rather than whipping the veil off the gleaming new GBA title we've all been feverishly waiting for, Nintendo's dusted off its back catalogue again and squeezed out some more old-skool Mario hi-jinx.

This time around, you're getting a rehash of the seminal Super Mario Bros 3 – this being near-identical to the SNES remake of the original 1988 game.

The good news, though, is that SMB3 is another piece of genuine Miyamoto magic, finely balanced and perfectly tuned into a triple-A orgy of fun. Familiar pounding action takes place across eight unique worlds stuffed with series regulars such as the Goombas and Koopas.

Thankfully, Nintendo has implemented some genuinely interesting new features into its fourth Mario Advance game. With the forthcoming e-reader attachment, you can scan in special cards to unlock new gameplay elements such as extra levels and special power-ups to help you through those tricky areas. But whether these additions will be enough to appease the clamouring of Mario fans until the all-new title shows up remains to be seen. CVG

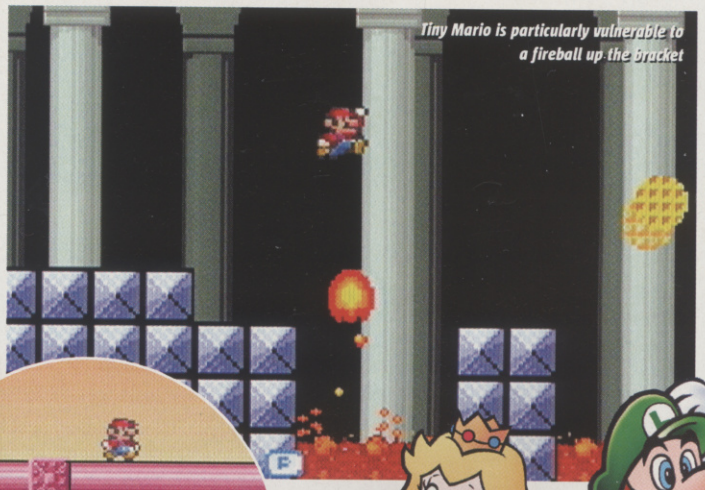
POWER DRESSER

For his latest GBA appearance, Mario's kicked the mothballs out of his closet and brought along some of his fanciest outfits to help him through.

Modelling one of these special suits in SMB3 imbues Mario with unique abilities for the duration of the level, or at least until you blunder carelessly into an enemy.

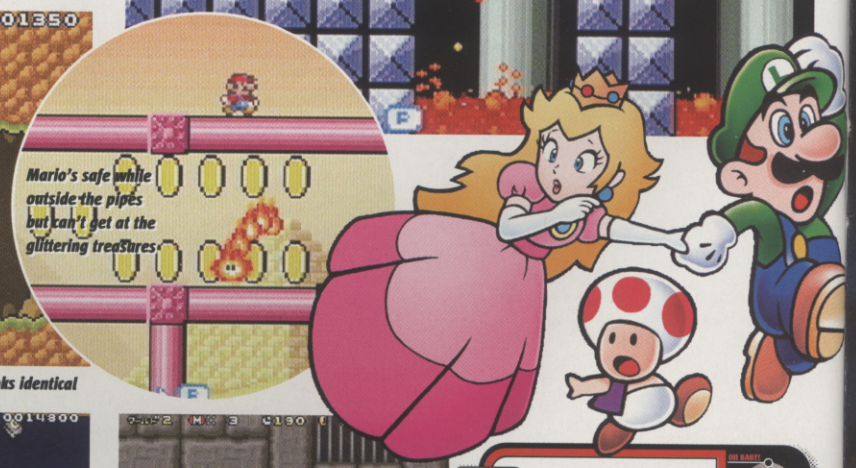
Hop into your frogsuit and Mario will come over all agile like some crazy amphibian

Then slip into Mario's raccoon suit to tail-flap your way up to out-of-reach areas

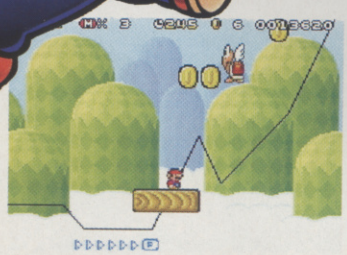


Tiny Mario is particularly vulnerable to a fireball up the bracket

If you played the SNES update you'll notice it looks identical

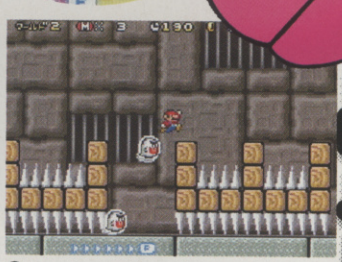


Mario's safe while outside the pipes but can't get at the glittering treasures



No surprises as to where the platform's going to float next but it doesn't make it easy

At the end of each world there is a battle aboard a floating, Bullet Bill-ridden pirate ship



Some levels will soon have you crying hot, salty tears of frustration. You'll see!

CVG OPINION

The return of a classic. It looks and sounds as good as Mario ever did and plays like a dream, but how about something fresh for our Mario moolah? Matt

WE LOVE

- One of the best platformers ever
- The figure-hugging raccoon outfit
- Innovative e-reader support

WE HATE

- Re-re-release of a 15-year-old game
- Far more linear than recent Mario
- Same old Mario Classic multiplayer

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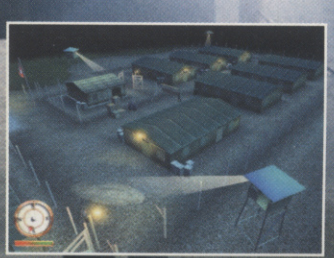

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Stunning water and wind effects top off the game's lush graphics

The weather's authentic but you'll have to provide your own silly trousers

■ PUBLISHER NINTENDO
■ DEVELOPER CAMELOT SOFTWARE
■ OUT SPRING 2004

ONLINE GAMING x4

IN A NUTSHELL

Looking for an entertaining alternative to Tiger Woods PGA Tour? Mario and friends hit the green for more ball-battering mayhem in this GameCube remake of Nintendo's arcade take on golf.

WWW.MARIO-GOLF.COM

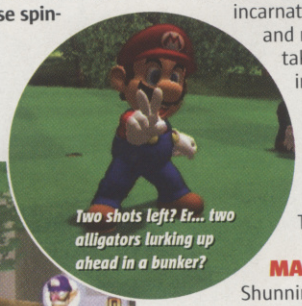
UPDATE!

MARIO GOLF

TOADSTOOL TOURNAMENT

On an alternate reality, there's a huge demonic Mario sat atop a heaving throne of gamers' bones, laughing like a maniac as he fashions more and more franchise spin-offs out of the crushed hopes of GameCube owners everywhere.

This game lies somewhere along the entertainment spectrum between Mario Kart and Mario Paint. Mario Golf was rightly heralded in its original N64 incarnation as a bit of a gem and now Nintendo has taken advantage of the increased polygon-pushing power of the GC and released a prettier, fancier rehash in the form of Toadstool Tournament.


Two shots left? Er... two alligators lurking up ahead in a bunker?

MAGIC MUSHROOM?

Shunning the simulation slant of EA's Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003, Mario Golf emphasises simplification and accessibility over golfing realism. Although it delivers a surprisingly authentic game of golf, this is predominately still pure arcade fun wrapped up in a slick and sugary Nintendo bow.

With a huge roster of courses ranging from simple fairway play to the pipe-clogged and chomp-infested later stages, Mario Golf makes the most of its franchise attachments.

Featuring over a dozen playable characters and Tournament, Doubles and Cooperative modes for up to four players, the game looks set to offer the usual polished Nintendo spin on the sport and a more than adequate diversion for anyone looking for an altogether light-hearted arcade-style experience.

Here's hoping the big N will dust off a different franchise for the game's next incarnation, though – Metroid Golf, anyone? CVG

Waluigi's ball flies off into the forest... never to be seen again?

Golf may grow in popularity if all the ladies wore these skimpy outfits

Aim inside the red circle to practise your putting skills

The tutorial covers everything the golf virgin needs to know

BAGS OF TEE

If the tribulations of Tournament mode start to wear you down, Mario Golf provides a wealth of alternative action to shake your balls at before heading back to the clubhouse.

Grab the most money before sinking the ball in Coin Attack mode

The slot machine determines the course conditions and available clubs

Successfully navigate the golden hoops strewn around the course

Knock one into the hole in record time for victory in Speed Golf

Whack your balls hard enough and you'll see lights before your eyes

Get your technique up to scratch and you'll get used to this screen

CVG OPINION

Big spherical arcade thrills for anyone seeking good solid golfing fun over realism. Did it really have to be another Mario game, though? **Matt**

WE LOVE
- Crisp visuals, slick presentation
- Unique modes and unlockable stuff
- Accessible to golfing novices

WE HATE
- Mario courses are a long way in
- Whacking Mario into titles is getting tedious

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CHALLENGE CVG ★on tour

TEAM CVG VS SWINDON

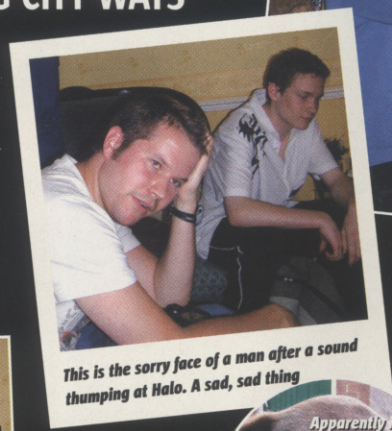
REPRESENTING CVG: ALEX SIMMONS & GRAEME BOYD

REPRESENTING SWINDON: LUKE SWAN & JAMIE MUNDY

TEACHING COUNTRY BOYS A LESSON WITH OUR FANCY BIG CITY WAYS

Ah, summer. Sunlight streaming through emerald flushed trees. Gentle butterflies floating on the soft, balmy air. And the CVG team, pale skin glistening with scalding sweat in the seething hot-box of the office.

Our mums are always telling us to get out and do something healthy, so Alex and Graeme were happy to shuffle blinking into the sunlight and visit 15-year-old Luke Swan. Luke lives in a place called the 'countryside', which is actually *outside* of London. In the countryside they have these things called 'animals'. When Al and Graeme arrived one of these animals was chewing on what looked like a human leg bone. Terrifying, but there was worse to come...



1 ROUND ONE: A LOCAL SHOP FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

Confused by the open air and lack of high-rise buildings, Alex and Graeme agreed to a team game of Halo. This quickly degenerated into a fiasco. Team CVG were little more than target practice for crack-shot Luke and his pal Jamie. "This is how it must have felt leaving the trenches in the First World War," pined Graeme while Luke's pet dog wiped its sticky mouth all over Alex's arm. "It's the size of a horse!" he squealed.

The match finished with Luke shooting Graeme through the head with a pistol. From halfway across the level. While jumping. The score: 50-7.

2 ROUND TWO: YOU GOT A PURTY MOUTH

Al and Graeme suggested a few bouts at Namco's Soulcalibur II in an effort to regain some pride. Graeme's frenetic button bashing took chunks out of Luke's energy, but the country lad used Nightmare's massive sword to finish the job.

Alex had more luck with Kilik. It was a close-run thing, but Alex's complex offensive tactics – "I kept hitting two buttons and pushing forward" – and Kilik's big stick won the day. "I don't know his combos so I can't block them!" whined Luke. They still have bad losers in the countryside, then...

3 ROUND THREE: YOU'RE NOT FROM ROUND 'ERE, ARE YOU?

Faced with defeat, Alex and Graeme were delighted to hear that Luke and his chums never play football games and actually preferred something called 'rugby', which is a countryside sport probably played with a sheep, a marrow and some haystacks.

Calls of "What am I doing?" and "Who am I?" from Luke and Jamie were sweet music to our boys, who used their many hours of Pro Evo training to pull off a spectacular 4-0 exhibition complete with mesmerising ball skills and over-enthusiastic air-punching. Back of the net!

THE FINAL RESULT: A DEAD HEAT!

Feeling dizzy from the fresh, unpolluted air, Alex and Graeme breathed a deep sigh of relief. After a marathon of games there was nothing to separate the competing factions.

Though soundly thumped at Halo, our lads used their considerable button-bashing skills to thrash out a draw at Soulcalibur II and secured the tie on Winning Eleven.

With the locals growing increasingly agitated, Al and Graeme were bundled back onto the train to the safety and security of London. CVG still doesn't know the meaning of defeat – will you be the one to teach us?

COME ON! HAVE IT!

CHALLENGE CVG ★on tour

We're sick and tired of having people round to the office only for them to get massacred. It's too easy for us, see?

To give you a chance we'll forego our home advantage. We want to bring the pain to your turf! Think you can take on the might of team CVG? Then send in the form, lock down your living room and get ready for a showdown you'll never forget.

★HELLO, MY NAME IS: .....

★BUT YOU MUST CALL ME ..... [nickname] ★AND I'M ..... [age]

★I AM THE BEST AT: ..... [game name]

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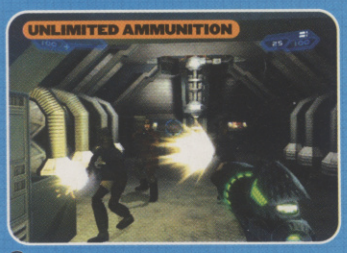
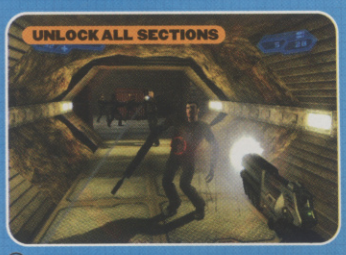
Input the following codes during gameplay while you are equipped with the Electro-Kosh. After you input the level codes you can access it through your save file.

L1, R1, L1, R1, A, B, B, A, X, Y



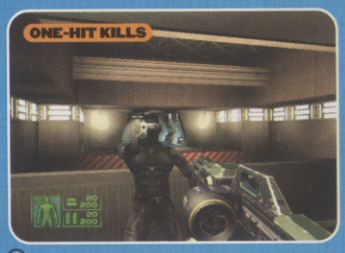
L1, R1, L1, R1, A, B, B, A, X, X

L1, R1, L1, R1, A, A, B, B, X, B

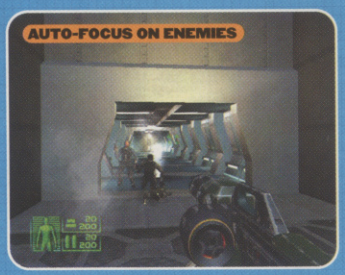


L1, R1, L1, R1, A, A, B, B, X, X

L1, R1, L1, R1, A, B, B, A, Y, Y

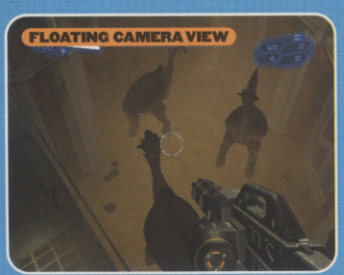


L1, R1, L1, R1, A, B, B, A, A



L1, R1, L1, R1, A, B, B, A, B, A

L1, R1, L1, R1, A, B, B, A, B, B



L1, R1, L1, R1, A, B, B, A, Y, X

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS

Thanks to David B from Sheffield for sending in the following code.

LEVEL SELECT/SKIP

Pause the game. Hold down L1, R2, Down and Triangle at the same time and let them go, then very quickly tap Circle, Up, Square, Triangle, Right, Down. The level options will appear in the pause menu.

INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB

At the main menu hold down L and R (triggers) then tap in Up, Up, Down, Up, A, X, A, B, Up, Down, Y, Start.

YAGER

Enter the following as your Profile names to activate a code.

UNLOCK LEVELS

lvl.activate 1

NINE CONTINUES

set MAXCNT 9

UNLOCK EVERYTHING IN THE DATABASE

data.setvis 1

STAR TREK: ELITE FORCE 2

Start the game with the following command line parameter (this may vary depending on where you installed the game): C:\ProgramFiles\Activision\EF2\EF2.exe"+ set cheats 1. Then in the game press ~ to bring down the console window and type in any of the following codes.

Effect	Code
God mode	god
Weapons	give all
No clipping mode	noclip
Invisible	notarget
100 Health	health 100
Suicide	kill

BRUTE FORCE

For a bit of help in this squad-based third-person shooter, just input one of the following codes as a profile name.

NAME	EFFECT
BRUTAL	Brutal difficulty
DELDAY	Enemies die quicker
DEADAIM	Better aiming
ERINROBERTS	Better defence
HVYMTL	Cartoon mode
MATTSOELL	Harder characters
RAPIDFIRE	Fire quicker
SPRAGNT	Stupid AI

YOUR BEST TIPS

If you've got a star-quality tip that you want to share or if you'd like our resident expert Barny to answer a query, send it into us at:

CVGTIPS@DENNIS.CO.UK

EXTENDED PLAY TIPS, COMPUTER AND VIDEOGAMES, DENNIS PUBLISHING, 30 CLEVELAND STREET, LONDON W1T 4JD

THE HULK

The following codes can only be entered in one of the in-game terminals.

HULK TRANSFORMED MOVIE ART

SANFRAN

HULK VS. HULK DOGS MOVIE ART

PITBULL

DESERT BATTLE MOVIE ART

FIFTEEN

HULK MOVIE F/X

NANOMED

GREY HULK

JANITOR

SEGA SMASH PACK

ECCO THE DOLPHIN CHEAT MODE

Have Ecco face right or left. As he turns pause while he faces the screen and press R, B, R, B, R, Down, R, Up.

ECCO THE DOLPHIN PASSWORDS

LEVEL	CODE
Undercaves	HYNCSRDQ
The Vents	XPRMMZBD
The Lagoon	RKIVVHCC
Ridge Water	RTGCXGB
Open Ocean	W-QBCXG-
Ice Zone	-YNTCXGS
Hard Water	RFXPCXGV
Cold Water	YC-?CXGQ
Open Ocean(2)	TS-K-WGC
Island Zone	HSXPBXGX
Deep Water	KSWKCXGV
The Marble Sea	R-GGFXGY
The Library	NX:KFXGJ
Deep City	GZPTFXG-
City of Forever	N-WBYCXGW
Jurassic Beach	TKGTGTGQ

Pteranodon Pond	F?TXGTGF
Origin Beach	LR:LGTG:
Trilobite Circle	X-WQGTGT
Dark Water	VFCRKTGK
City of Forever(2)	?STNNTPY
The Tube	BV?!TQPY
Welcome to the Machine	BTWJVQP·
The Stomach	DBBXVQPK
The Last Fight	DLHSTQPT

GOLDEN AXE LEVEL SELECT

Star Arcade and hold Down/Left and B then press Start at character select. A number will appear in the upper left-hand corner. Change that number with the Dpad to get a different level.

GOLDEN AXE NINE CONTINUES

In Arcade mode hold Down/Left and A and R. Let go and press Start.

SONIC SPINBALL LEVEL SELECT

Tap A, Down, B, Down, R, Down, A, B, Up, A, R, Up, B, R, Up at the options screen then enter one of the following codes.

LEVEL 2 LAVA POWERHOUSE
Hold A, press Start

LEVEL 3 THE MACHINE
Hold B, press Start

LEVEL 4 SHOWDOWN
Hold R, press Start

ELDER SCROLLS: BLOOD MOON

Press ~ to bring down the console and type in player-> followed by one of the following cheat codes.

EFFECT	CODE
Flight mode	setflying 1
Big Jumps	setsuperjumping 1
Walk on water	setwaterwalking 1
Breathe underwater	setwaterbreathing 1
Set fatigue	setfatigue (number)
Set magic	setmagicka (number)
Set health	sethealth (number)
God mode	togglegodmode

CONFLICT DESERT STORM

Press L, L, R, R, U, U, D, D, X, X, Y, Y at the main menu to activate a cheat menu in the in game options menu.

WARCRAFT 3 THE FROZEN THRONE

Press Enter to display the message box then type in one of these codes and press Enter.

EFFECT	CODE
Instant Win	allyourbasearebelongtous
Instant Loss	somebodysetusupthebomb
View entire map	iseedeadpeople
Units need no farms	pointbreak
Instant spell performance	thedudeabides
Turn off Tech-Tree	synergy
Turn off Victory	itvexesme
Invulnerability	whosyourdaddy
Lumber	leafittome (number)
Lumber and Gold	greedisgood (number)
Gold	keysersoze (number)
Instant doom	iocainepowder
Quick research	whoisjohngalt
Research all upgrades	sharpandshiny
Morning	riseandshine
Infinite mana	thereisnospoon
Night	lightsout

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE 2

Enter the following codes into SOF2 during gameplay.

GOD
Click down, hold the Left analog and press B, A, X, Y

WEAPONS
Click down, hold the Left analog and press X, Y, A, B

UNLIMITED AMMO
Click down, hold the Left analog and press Black, A, Y, White

MAP CHANGE
Click down, hold the Left analog Black, B, A, White

REALLY STUCK?

Absolutely stumped on a game? Ridiculed by your mates? There is hope:

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BARNY'S PROBLEM CORNER

Is your brow furrowing into a deep crease? Allow Barny to sort out all your gaming problems. But go easy on the girl questions

BRUTE FORCE

Q. On Return To Osiris I've got stuck at the transmitter. I can easily kill all the aliens guarding it but I don't know how to destroy the transmitter.
Steve Harford, London

A. *You need to deactivate three control panels to switch off the shields protecting the transmitter, but the problem is they don't look anything like control panels. This is why you have not spotted them although you probably walked past them.*

The first one is through the portal on the top of the hill. Go through and run to the end and go behind the rock where, if you look carefully, you'll see something that can be activated. Press the switch and go back down. The other two should be easy to spot now – they're to the left and right of the transmitter. When you've done all three point your cursor over the base of the transmitter and shoot whenever your cursor turns yellow.

GTA VICE CITY

Q. I'm stuck on the mission called Psycho Killer. Can you help?
Anon, via email

A. *After you start the mission hunt around for a really decent fast car. Park it by the place where the stalker appears. Go along with the mission as normal then when the stalker starts making his escape jump into your fast car rather than the slow limo you're given and chase him. It should be easy to take him out now.*

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME MASTER QUEST

Q. After beating Wind Waker I thought I'd try the Master Quest version of Ocarina and it's really hard. I have got as far as killing Dark Link but now I don't know where to go next.
Adrian, Wales

A. *Go through the door after killing Dark Link and Longshot the panel. Longshot to the end of the river. Swim through the tunnel at the end, light some torches and exit using the door in the previous room. In the next room stand in the water and Longshot the crystal switch. When you're at the top use Din's Fire then jump over and get the boss key. Now return to the main room and open the boss door.*

MACE GRIFFIN BOUNTY HUNTER

Q. I'm having a lot of trouble with Mace Griffin. I normally work out what I need to do after a bit but now I'm totally stuck on the Sharp Shooter level. I think I'm in section 7 where I've just pressed the button in the command room and have to get to my ship really quick after killing some men. Then I have to fly outside and shoot down some ships,

The problem is that you have a very short time limit and I find that it usually runs out a few seconds after I make it into space.
James, via email

A. *After you press the switch and the timer starts, look out of the window and use a single rocket to kill the men on the lift. Now very quickly shoot the glass to drop down to the next room and run round to the lift and press the switch.*

When it's about halfway up you need to drop onto it and then onto the ground and make a dash for the ship. If you wait for the lift to come back up you will always run out of time.

CHAOS LEGION PLAYER'S GUIDE

If you enjoy button mashing and breaking joypads then this is the game for you. Barny guides you through the endless waves of incoming monsters

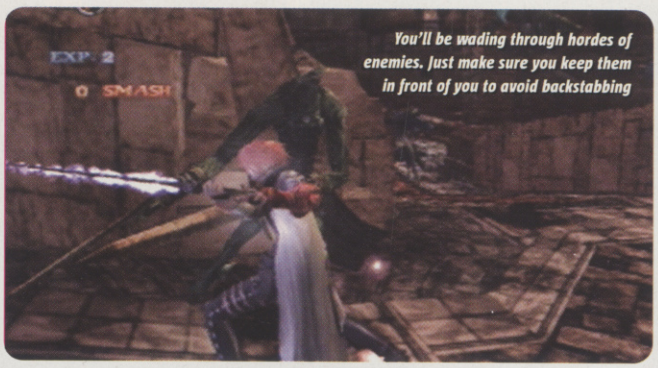
1 PROLOGUE

This is easy, until you meet the boss that is. When you jump in, fight the boss only as the others will die when he dies anyway. Try to stay in the middle or else you find yourself fighting the camera too. Make sure the Legion is doing a lot of the work for you and jump back when the boss gets ready to move.

The boss's weak point is its head. Jump and slash it

2 STAGE 2

Run to the end of the first section until the dog-like things appear. Summon the Sword Legion and kill them all. Be sure to grab the Thanatos Clip in the following section. When you reach the boss you should run in and swipe at it about five times, then back off when it does a solitary attack. Then go back in and hit it five times and back off. Keep doing this until it collapses. Summon your Legion and lay into it. After it gets back up you'll need to repeat the previous tactic to make it fall over again. If it summons any helpers, ignore them.



You'll be wading through hordes of enemies. Just make sure you keep them in front of you to avoid backstabbing

3 STAGE 3

When you reach the shooting statues get behind them and start slashing, a process that takes a while. Afterwards use the Arrow Legion on the flying monsters. In the next scene you need to concentrate on the spawner first. When it dies so does everything else. Follow the route and when the gate slams shut, run back up the hill and kill the spawner that appears.

The camera will focus on a Thanatos Clip in the next section so get that first. Get in among the five spawners in this part, as being in between them will shield you from being battered by all the other creatures. Either summon the Sword Legion or use the special attack when you're in the middle of the spawners. When you reach the boss run round to its behind and that's where you want to stay for the rest of the fight. Its minions will disappear after you get halfway through the boss's second health bar. If you can stay by the side of its head without being hurt too much you can attack its weak spot to kill it quicker, but you'll need to watch your health.

These shooting things have a lot of health but as they don't move they're easy to kill

You should be getting good at jumping and slashing by now

You should always try to kill spawners first as they constantly generate tons of new enemies

4 STAGE 4

The best way to get the spawner in midair is to stand right next to it and press attack. Keep jumping and you will avoid most of the damage from the shooters and other beasts around you. Once it is dead a few more will appear around the map. You can easily kill all of them by getting behind them and slashing away. The last one will be heavily guarded but does not seem to be good at spawning new monsters so pick off the moving ones first, then attack the spawner. After it has died be sure to grab the Thanatos Clip from its remains before going through the gate.

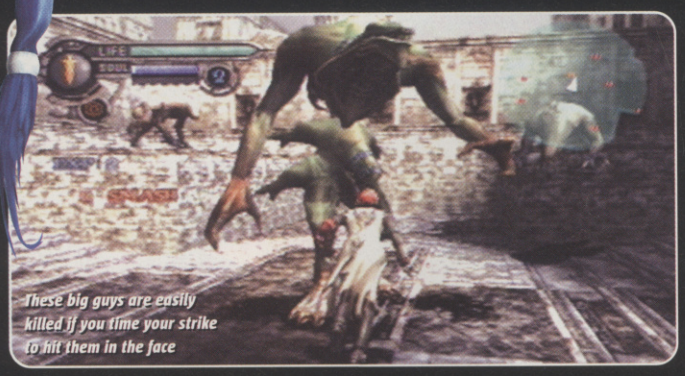
Now you get to fight the boss from the last level. Attack its head to kill it quickly then two more will arrive. Use the Sword Legion and concentrate on one head at a time. After they're dead you must fight three more at once. So long as you avoid being caught between them you should be able to win this easily. If that does not work for you then you can do this the long way by using the Arrow Legion and staying near the heads, and you will eventually wear each one down. The main problem you will have is being knocked around like a bowling ball so stay away from the groups of beasts and concentrate on one big guy at a time.

5 STAGE 5

Kill the smaller beasts first. For the big one stand next to it, jump and swipe. Do this continuously (do not touch the direction controls as you need to stay on that exact spot). As you're attacking its head it will be stunned all the time. When you meet the shield carrier get right behind him with the Sword Legion and hack away.

In the next scene concentrate on the target. If you're quick enough you can keep it airborne the whole time. In the following section run round to the back and take out the second spawner first. There is one spot where you can attack the first spawner without taking damage from the shooters. Get right behind it and use the jumping swipe method to keep yourself rooted to that spot. If you press the attack button just as you begin to come down after a jump you will hit the spawner more times.

Run to the end of the next scene and locate the spawner. Get behind it and use the usual jumping tactic. Before leaving this scene make sure you get the Thanatos Clip, which is on a ledge round the corner. The next section is easy except that the second set of targets have massive health bars and they each spawn twice. The boss is very easy. Go up to the plant-like thing and start hacking at it. When its belly is revealed use Sword Legion special attacks three times in quick succession, then run away before he lets off his big burst of dust. When you're backing off make sure you can see the boss so you'll know when to jump. Repeat this process a few times and after a while the laser creatures will change tactics so it's a good idea to start killing them.



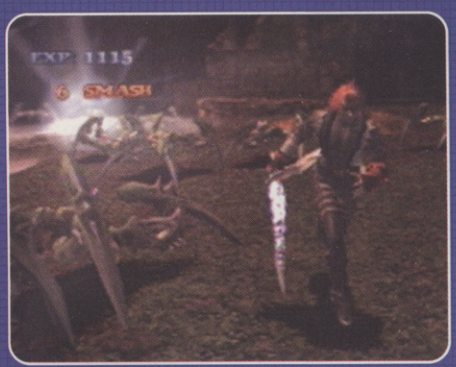
These big guys are easily killed if you time your strike to hit them in the face

The fat shield carriers are slow so you should have no problems avoiding their counter-attacks

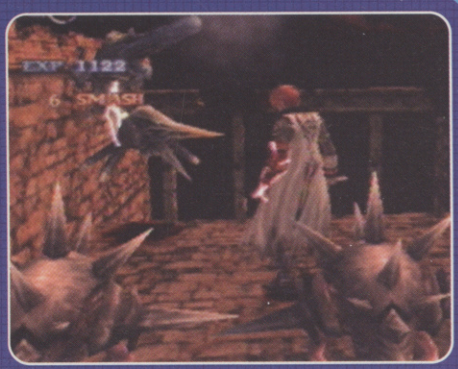
6 STAGE 6

Kill most of the monsters in the first scene then head up the rubble on the side and kill the beasts there. After most are dead you'll find a Thanatos Clip. In Scene Two run all the way round to the back of the spawner and attack its rear as usual. You can get behind the next spawner as well but it takes a bit of effort. Kill the target in the next scene to stop the spawning.

When you meet the invisible bosses, use the Claw Legion as they're good against metal enemies. Try to lure one away from the pack so you can batter it while remaining unmolested by the others, especially the annoying hounds.



Lots of monsters can be killed from behind and their bulk will prevent other monsters from hurting you



Remember to use your Legion's special moves by pressing Triangle. Use Circle to target a particular monster

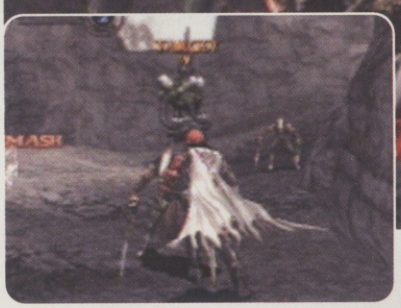
7 STAGE 7

The first scene is easy: just get behind the spawner and do the jump and downward slash move. The target will appear on the bridge in the second scene but only when you walk onto the bridge itself. In the next section run to the end and get behind the shield carrier and hack it to bits. In the following scene go to the end and jump over both shield carriers and attack the spawner from behind.

When you're trapped in the canyon destroy the first enemies, then summon the Power Legion to knock over and kill the invisible monsters. After you get the gate down run along the path. When you see a shield carrier on a ledge to the right summon the Power Legions and do a flip jump onto the ledge. Kill the shield carrier then target the gate ahead and summon the Power Legions to smash it down.

Go through and get the Thanatos Clip. The boss will stay out of range most of the time so be ready to jump over it so you can spend the maximum amount of time slashing its belly. Each time you get a good attack in (summon the Power Legion as soon as you reach the belly) you'll take off some of its armour until you reveal the eyes. Repeat the process (use jumping attacks now as the eyes are vulnerable). You'll get blasted by the eyes but if you do jump attacks you'll take away its health bar very quickly.

Some creatures will only respawn a set amount of times



When you get a Target killing it often gets rid of everything else and turns them into health for you

8 STAGE 8

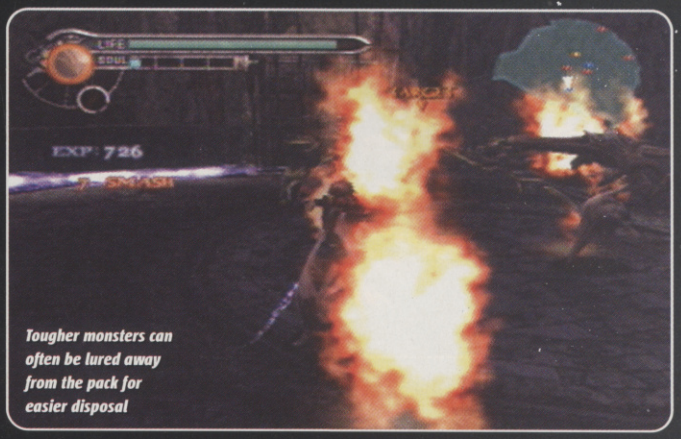
Initally the first bit seems really hard, but actually it isn't. The shooters take a long time between shots and you'll easily see when they are powering so move to a different spot. The invisible beast is not too good at hitting you either so stay behind and hack away.

Fight your way through a few more sections until you reach some shooters, shield carriers and an invisible. Kill the shooters first then lure the invisible away from the carriers and kill it, then do each carrier in turn.

When you meet four invisibles lure one of them towards the gate then jump behind it, summon a Legion and kill it; do the same for the rest. At the split in the path go right and run round to the spawner at the end. Kill it first as it will take the smaller beasts with it, and once it's gone you'll find it simpler to kill the rest of the spawners with less interference. Use the Power Legion to fight off each of the spawner's guards while you hack it to pieces. When everything's dead go back and take the other path. Run to the top and use the jump-and-strike method to kill the spawners. Then return.

If you've already beaten the game and are playing Side B there will be a monster after you open the middle door. Kill it then backtrack to an opened door behind which is a Thanatos Clip. Take the middle path and fight the boss. You'll want to jump-attack the monster's forelegs until it lets its abdomen down. Slash that whenever you get a chance. If you concentrate on hitting its legs it won't get many chances to laser you. If you can get both legs it will fall down, enabling you to do massive damage to its back.

Keeping the camera pointed in the right place is half the battle won

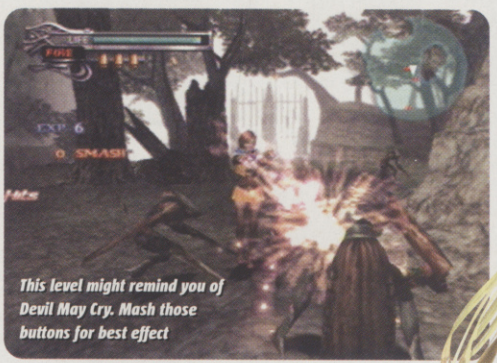


Tougher monsters can often be lured away from the pack for easier disposal

9 STAGE 9

Use gun mode to blast your way through the first couple of sections. You might find it easier to kick the spawners to death, as it's hard to move around when you're shooting although you can hammer the fire button very fast to keep up a lethal barrage. However, avoid severe arm pain by button-mashing only for spawners. In the third scene run to the end and jump behind the spawner and button-bash till it's dead. Button-mash to kill the first spawner then jump onto its ledge to target the second one. To take out the third, hammer the buttons at speed to chop down the smaller targets and then tap even quicker when in range of the spawner. Jump onto its ledge to continue.

Use the special Circle button move to take out the spawner at the top of the ledges. To kill the shield carriers get close to them. When they swing their shields back off and then fire at their unprotected bodies as quickly as possible. Repeat this until they die. When you meet the boss go into gun mode and walk against the ledge; this will keep you moving while not really going anywhere. Doing this will avoid a lot of the smaller creatures' attacks, letting you concentrate on extreme button-mashing towards the boss, especially when it raises its cover. When you see the red lasers simply jump into the air while continuing to fire.



This level might remind you of Devil May Cry. Mash those buttons for best effect

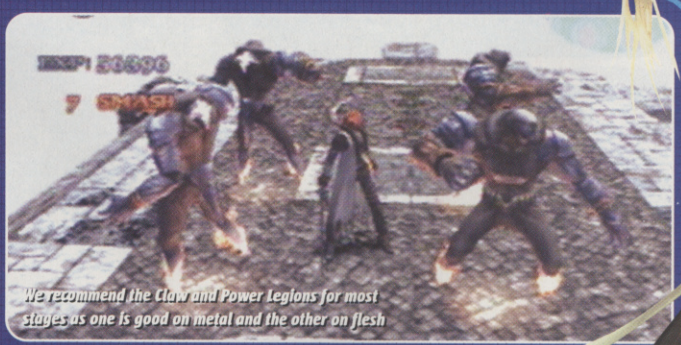
10 STAGE 10

Always kill shooting enemies first as they hardly ever re-spawn. You should also be using the Claw and Power Legions for this level and one of them should be upgraded to give you the double jump. You will get to a scene where you need to leap up and kill shooters. The most effective way to kill the invisibles is to isolate one, target it then stand in front of it and summon the Power Legion. They should knock it on its back when they charge as a group, doing massive damage.

Once they are all dead hack your way carefully through the next section, at the very end of which you'll meet a new target. First kill the shooters as they do not respawn (target them first then run up to them when they are lying down to shoot and summon the Claw Legion, which usually kills them in one hit). Get the target to the far end, and set the Claw Legion on it while you fend off the little soldiers.

In the next section look for a small platform up on the right. Jump up and the gate will lock you in with about 12 shield carriers. Kill all of them and get the Thanatos Clip. When you reach an area with two iron giants and a spawner use the Claw Legion to take out the shooters first, then get one of the massive monsters to the far end and set the Claw Legions on it using their special while you keep busy with the little grunts. When the first one is dead try to lure the second one to the far end and deal with it in the same way. If it won't budge then have your Legions attack it while you try to quickly kill the spawner.

This boss is very similar to one you've already fought. Play around with the soldiers but keep the camera on the boss. When it's high up get ready to jump over its energy blast. As soon as you reach its belly unleash a Legion on it and slash away. Repeat this until you've uncovered the eyes. When you see the top eye use jump attacks to hit it and cause more damage.



We recommend the Claw and Power Legions for most stages as one is good on metal and the other on flesh

These soldiers seem hard at first. Make sure they're not behind you and slash away

It's not just slashing - use special moves to get out of trouble or knock over large enemies

Make sure you are equipped with a double jump as it makes things easier

11 STAGE 11

Kill the spawner at the back of the first section. In the second scene run down and around and then jump up to the top section; at the back is the target spawner. Jump over the shield carrier and attack the spawner from behind. Nothing can hit you while you are directly behind the spawner. Once it's dead so is everything else.

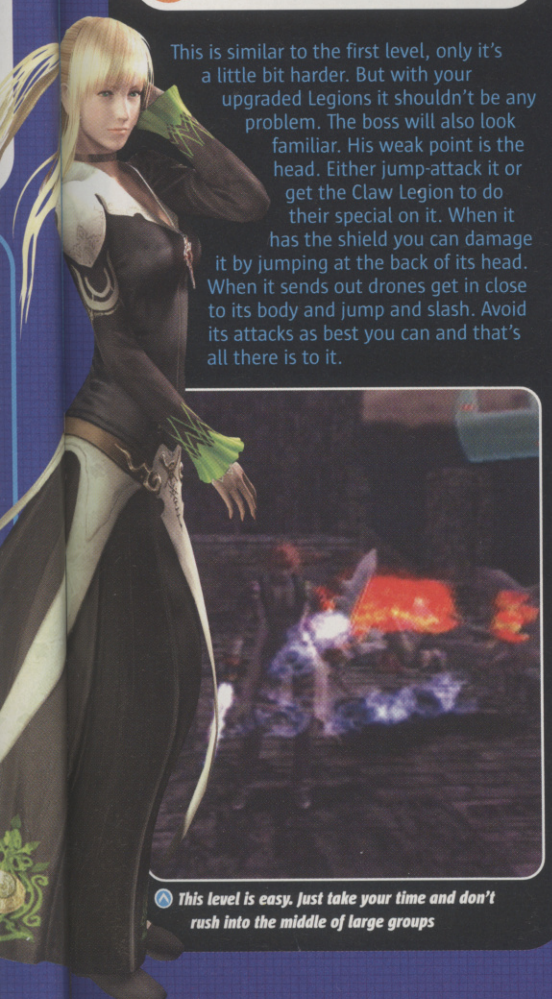
Kill the three spawners first in the next scene then do each smaller monster before bringing down the iron monster. Use your Power Legions in the next few sections to do the grunt work while you kill the targets until you get an iron giant monster. Target it and let the Claw Legion whittle it down while you defend them from the hordes of smaller soldiers. After this you have to kill a boss from one of the earlier levels but it's very easy.

The next few scenes are pretty simple. When you reach one where there are a couple of shooters on a high platform, jump up and knock them down but on the side away from the targets. Stay on the near side of the spawners and hopefully you'll be able to kill them without the iron giant coming over. The boss at the end is not as hard as he looks. Stay out of the central area and attack him whenever you get an opportunity. If you have the Claw Legion you can set them on him while you stand back and watch, although he has the ability to kill them off quickly if you're not careful.

When he starts slashing towards you with his sword, aim to do a double-jump attack at his head to avoid getting severely damaged and hurt him a little bit. He does have one devastating move where red energy crosses the arena but it's easy to avoid. Make sure you do avoid it as it can strip half a health bar easily. If you play this level on Side B you will find monsters here and get the last Thanatos Clip.

12 STAGE 12

This is similar to the first level, only it's a little bit harder. But with your upgraded Legions it shouldn't be any problem. The boss will also look familiar. His weak point is the head. Either jump-attack it or get the Claw Legion to do their special on it. When it has the shield you can damage it by jumping at the back of its head. When it sends out drones get in close to its body and jump and slash. Avoid its attacks as best you can and that's all there is to it.

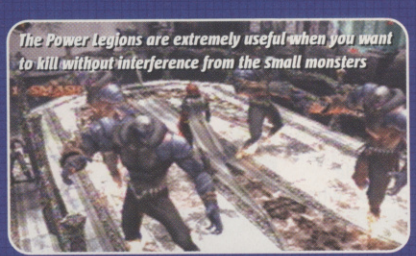


This level is easy. Just take your time and don't rush into the middle of large groups

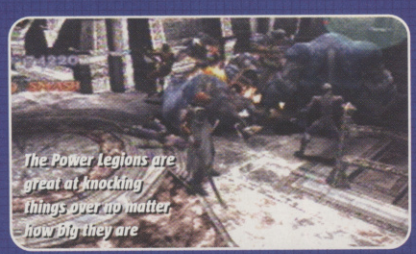
13 STAGE 13

Concentrate on the spawner in the first scene while your Legion defends you. Kill the grunts afterwards and then do the shield carriers. In the second scene you can lure most of the soldiers into the previous area and then dash back to concentrate on the shooters and then the target. In the next scene run around until you've collected the grunts at the bottom then leave them there while you hop to the top.

Set your Legion on the spawner while you proceed to kill the shooters. Take the upper exit and kill what you find. There's no real boss at the end of the level, just a bunch of enemies with a combined health bar. Set the Claw Legion on the big guy while you start attacking the invisible dog and other shooters.



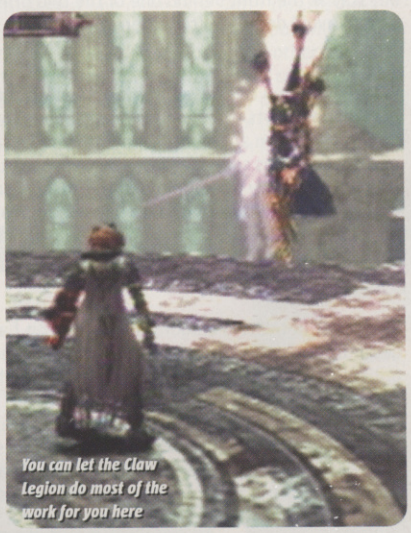
The Power Legions are extremely useful when you want to kill without interference from the small monsters



The Power Legions are great at knocking things over no matter how big they are

14 FINAL STAGE

This boss fight is more or less the same as when you fought him before, only this time there's less space in which to run around, meaning you'll get hurt a lot more than before – but that won't matter if you've been hoarding health. He will dispose of most Legions quickly so send them in; when they've done a bit of damage get them back. If you're having trouble, the slow way to do this is to have the Claw Legion (which should be upgraded to near max by now) attack him with their special whenever he is not trying to slash you with his sword. When he's sword-slashing it's best to keep Legions out of his way unless you have large amounts of Soul Recovery items.



You can let the Claw Legion do most of the work for you here

WARIO WORLD PLAYER'S GUIDE

It's a wild world, populated by some nasty bosses. CVG shows you how to beat them

1 EXCITEMENT CENTRAL

1. BRUNOSAUR

Simply hit this brute of a Brunosaur as quickly as you can. When it gets mad and flashes red you will need to run around in circles to avoid getting mashed. If you knock it over make sure you fling it as far as you can, otherwise just keep on pounding until it dies.

2. GULP WORM

Find the boss's head by following the sand trails. When it pops up punch it a few times. When it goes red and gets its claws out run around quickly to avoid being cut up. When it starts shooting out spiked metal balls you'll want to dash up the pit slope and jump like mad. Apart from avoiding its attacks just concentrate on punching it in the face.

3. DINOMIGHTY

Follow the boss around and punch it in the area where its tail joins its body. When it rises a foot, back off until it stomps the ground. If it jumps in the air back off and leap over the shockwave when it hits the ground. You can also jump on its tail and hang on until it stops moving, then you can jump off and ground-pound its back to stun it.

Whenever the boss is dazed pick it up, swing it around as many times as you can manage and fling it across the room. If the boss stomps one of the stone urns in the arena it will hurt its foot and bounce out, showering you with coins.

Wario comes up against the Brunosaur. He needs to run around and hit it hard many, many times

Whenever it pops out to say hello show it some appreciation by smacking it in the face, really hard

Harass this boss until it lets its tail down, then hold on for dear life and ground-pound the brute into submission

2 SPOOKTASTIC WORLD

1. BRAWL DOLL

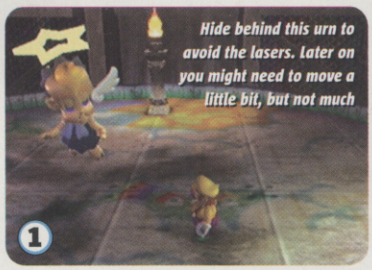
Use the dash attack to hurt the boss. Point Wario at it, perform a dash and as soon as you've done that turn right around and do it again. When it's dazed on the floor you can pick it up and spin it around to fling it and damage it. Afterwards it will shoot lasers at you but they are easy to dodge, especially if you're behind an urn. After you've spun it a few times it will unleash more and more lasers but stay at the front behind one of the two urns and you should be able to avoid damage altogether.

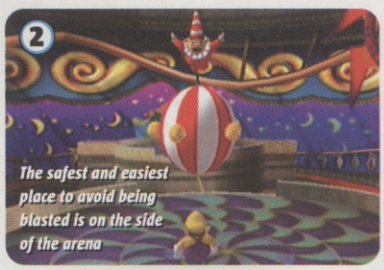
2. CLOWN AROUND

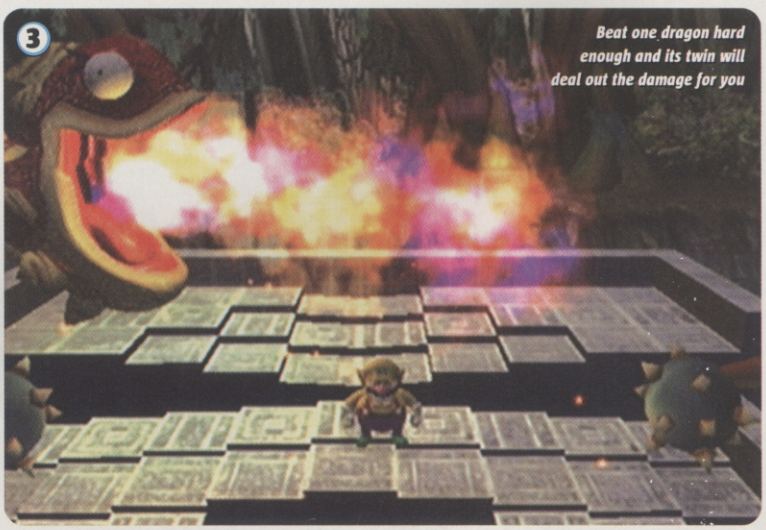
When the clown rides over on his ball stay out of his way until he gets off and starts throwing his heads at you. Avoid these and get behind the clown and punch him until you can pick him up and pile-drive him. As soon as you've done this look out for the giant beach ball and try to grab hold of the stickies on its side and ride over. If you fail, stand on the far left side to avoid the explosion when he lobs the ball back over. Repeat this process. If you see him get on the ball, try to grab it and ride over.

3. DUAL DRAGONS

Pick either of the two dragons' heads. After it has expelled some fire get in front of it and jump and punch it in the face. Keep doing this until it lies down. Now the other dragon will either breathe fire on its comrade causing it damage or it will breath out stickies, which you should avoid. If it does this stay near the prone dragon and as soon as it gets up punch it on the nose a few more times to make it go down. Keep doing this, as the fiery breath from one dragon is the only effective thing for damaging the health bar. If you run low on health look out for garlic, which sometimes comes out with the stickies.







3 THRILLSVILLE

1. WINTER WINDSTER

Follow the boss and pick up one of the balls she drops (not onto your head, by the way). Decide where the boss is going and pile-drive a ball into a lava pit that you think she'll go over. If you time it right the boss will be knocked down by the blast, allowing you to stun and pile-drive her.

Sometimes she'll come down of her own accord allowing you to attack and pile-drive. She has a few attacks such as her freezing breath – easy to avoid – but sometimes she'll try to hypnotise Wario. When this happens quickly move the stick around to break free.

2. SPIDERATICUS

This boss has a number of attacks. If it jumps in the air get ready to jump over its shockwave. If you see light near its mouth run back and forth to avoid a good lasering. Make sure you stay on the outside at all times because if you go on the web you'll walk very slowly and not be able to jump. Stay on the edge until the boss blows out a few stickies. Jump on the middle one and allow Wario to be sucked towards the boss. Just before you get to its head do a jump over its body and ground-pound the cross on its back or head. This will stun the boss.

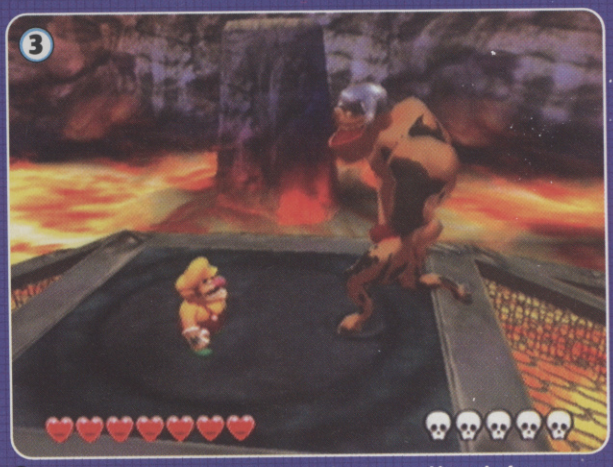
Pick it up and walk to the edge where you can pile-drive it. Do this a few times and its attacks will become more violent but you can avoid them in the same way as before; you'll just have to be quicker. Repeat this process until it's dead.

3. RED-BRIEF J

This is hard. Run around the edge of the arena putting a bit of distance between you and the boss. When he's about to charge stand near the edge (next to the lava) and get out of his way. His charge will make him lose balance (if he missed you), so run to the metal portion at the top and ground-pound it to knock the boss into the lava. After this he'll make longer attacks. It's best to keep running around the edge without stopping unless you see him off balance, in which case ground-pound the middle again. When he starts doing more than three dashes in a row, move back and forth after the second dashes to avoid being hit.

When you're hypnotised remember to waggle the stick around quickly, or else...

Never go on the gooey web as Wario walks slowly – easy pickings for the spider



Red-Brief J gets his name from the fact that he runs around in a pair of snazzy red underpants, just like CVG's very own Pete Walker (allegedly)

It's really hard to get the right cup near the end. Your best bet is to stand Wario next to one and try to move with it

This is one of the harder bosses as it uses speed rather than raw power so make sure you do the same

When he's unleashing his powerful attacks the best place to be is on the ladders on the side of the ship

4 SPARKLELAND

1. MEAN EMCEE

Start by laying into the clown in the usual fashion. When he flashes run away and then punch him when he starts wandering around again. After this the clown will hide in one of three cups that move around try and hit the one you think it's in. You may get it right but find the clown is not there, in which case simply jump up and punch the cup and if he was hiding inside he'll fall down stunned. Pick him up and pile-drive him into the ground. Repeat the previous steps only this time the cups will go much faster. If you pick the wrong cup you'll have to fight some minor creatures. Eventually the cups will move so fast that you'll likely have to guess.

2. IRON SIDER

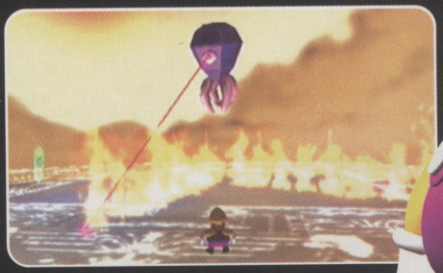
Run over to one of the hands and start punching it. As soon as it gets dizzy face the boss and throw the dazed hand at it. Don't get to close to the boss, as it will send out a shockwave which is hard to jump over. The boss will use its extremely powerful flamethrower attack that can easily be avoided by dashing around the arena. Three hands will appear now making things a bit harder, and the boss will also send out multiple shockwaves that you will need to hop over.

3. CAPTAIN SKULL

As soon as the fight starts jump down onto the blue-coloured rocky platform below and climb the rope ladder up to the boss. Punch him until he's dizzy then pile-drive him. Immediately jump back down and cross to the other side and do the same again. Repeat one more time. After this the boss will be moving around very quickly but will eventually settle on one side or the other and start unleashing power attacks that can all be avoided when you're on the rocky platform. Get to where the boss is and grab one of the wooden barrels nearby and pile-drive it on his head to daze him. Now pile-drive the boss again. Repeat this one more time to win.

5 TREASURE SQUARE

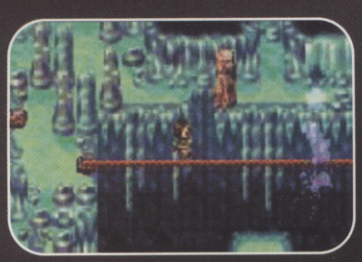
The last boss: this is easy so long as you get the hang of dashing. Otherwise you might get a right royal thrashing

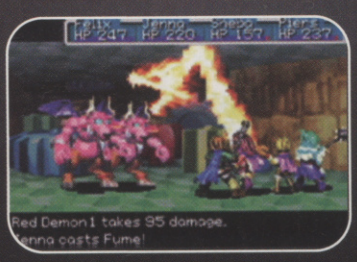


THE BLACK JEWEL

Scattered around the arena are trapped spiritlings. To hurt the boss smash the crystals holding the spiritlings. The Black Jewel will spit fire at you but you can avoid it by dashing, and if you're near the boss you can bash him as you go. After breaking open all the spiritlings the boss will come down dazed, enabling you to pile-drive it. Now repeat this process six times to win. Each time you knock a block off the jewel's health, its attacks will become harder to avoid so be sure to dash everywhere and you'll have no problems.

play with fire





http://goldensun.nintendo.co.uk

Golden Sun
The Lost Age

GAME BOY ADVANCE SP™

"One of the best RPGs available
on any console."
NOM 89%

"You could never accuse this game
of thinking too small."
NGC 9/10

"Slick, practised and enjoyable."
EDGE

OUT SEPT 19

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OUT OCT 24

3 games to make you think.

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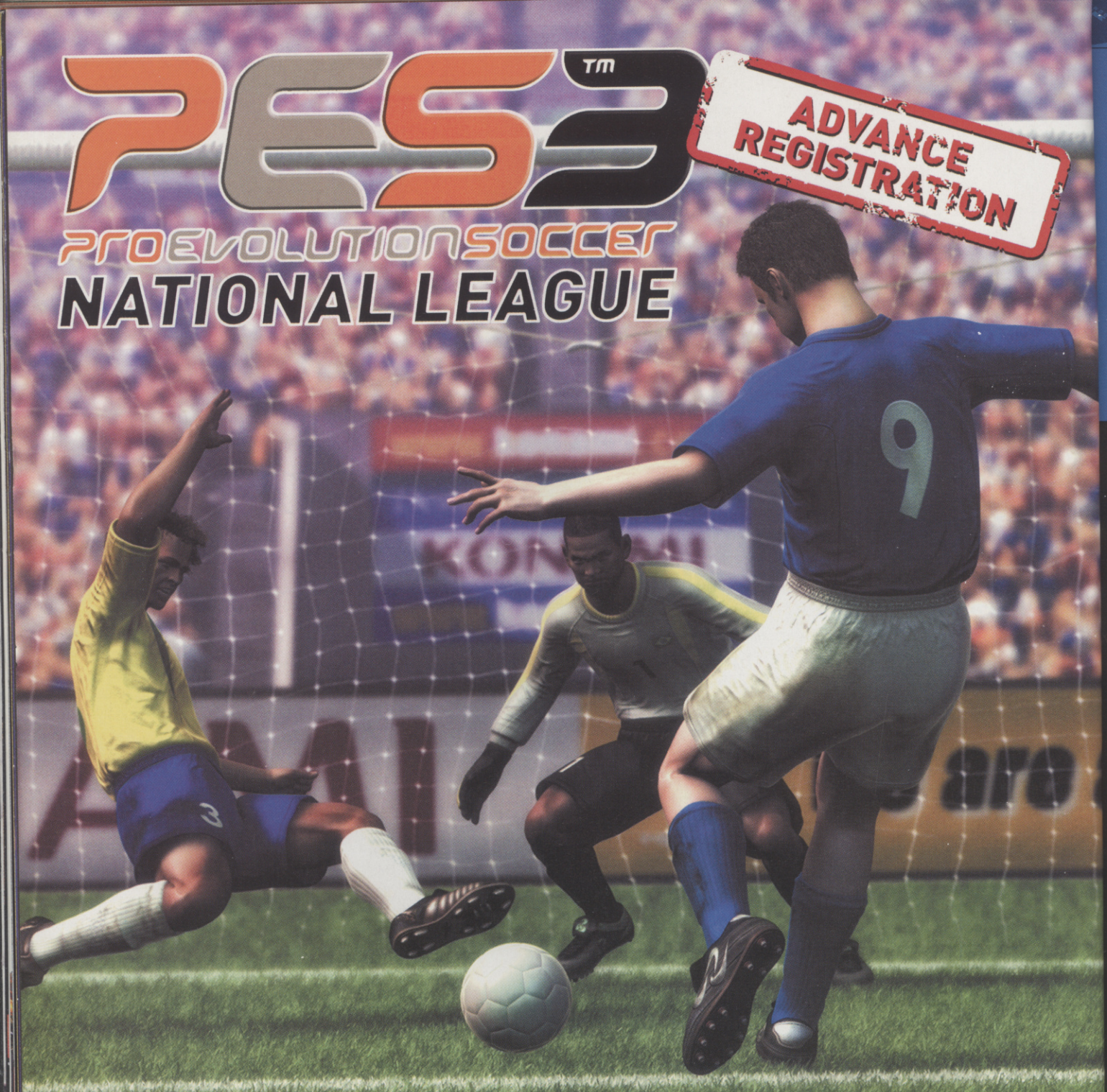

TAKE ON THE NATION IN THE PES3 LEAGUE

HURRY! Register now – it's as easy as...

1. From September 19th get yourself down to your local branch of GAME
2. Pre-order your copy of PES 3 and pay £1.99* for a limited edition PES 3 demo
3. Beat the PES 3 demo and register your score either at selected GAME stores or at www.pesleague.co.uk
4. If your score is high enough you'll be entered early into the PES 3 National League

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For all information on the PES3 league, including location of GAME stores running the demo visit:
www.pesleague.co.uk.

*£1.99 redeemable upon purchase of full product

REVIEWS

FULLY INDEPENDENT & MULTI-FORMAT ● TRUST NO ONE ELSE

CVG EXPERT REVIEWERS

Meet the people playing hard enough to snap their pinky fingers this month. Owwww!

Mike Cooper
MECH FOOTBALLING GOD
Torn between his love of Pro Evo and ZOE, poor Mike took to the pitch wearing a robot suit made of cardboard boxes. The heatwave broke, rain stopped play and the water turned him to mush.

Martion Korda
MULTIPLAYER LEGEND
A fearsome combatant in the realm of online Counter-Strike play and in the real world alike, we refuse to play with Martin any more on account of his monster frag record.

Graeme Boyd
SPORTS SUPER-STRATEGIST
We were quite alarmed to find Graeme all alone in our basement games room, hunched over with his club grasped firmly in his hands. We always thought he was a football man.

Richie Shoemaker
SHOOTER GURU
Thankfully, Richie got through a whole Star Wars review without using the hackneyed 'The Force is strong in this one'. He did make lightsaber noises while playing, though.

Stephen Daultrey
WORLD-CLASS ADVENTURER
Stephen loved the driving of Colin McRae 04 almost as much as the shooting of Conflict II. He is now pitching the idea of a war sim with rallying levels to any publisher that will let him past security.

STOP WHINGEING, SPREAD THE LOVE!

You know those chin-stroking types who bemoan the lack of originality in new games? You usually see them with a 'high-brow' games mag in one hand, and a bottle of Clearasil in the other. Well, this month shows them up for the closed-minded cynics they are.

Sure, on the surface you might not think there's much to be excited about in a bunch of sequels like ZOE 2, Soulcalibur II, Colin 04 and the usually average-at-best Star Wars release. But for new ideas and innovative features this could be the finest selection of the year so far.

ZOE 2 takes the solid Manga mech battling of the first game and delivers a more balanced and lengthier story. Soulcalibur II gives you different heroes to play as, depending on the format you buy. Colin 04 takes the stabilisers off with a brand new handling engine, and Star Wars: KOTOR out-adventures Final Fantasy.

Realise that innovation is already here and you will be in a much sweeter gaming place. And hey, it might even clear up those irritating zits.

LEE
Lee Skittrell
Games Editor

THIS MONTH

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101 Group S Challenge .....XBOX

WHAT THE SCORES MEAN

CVG only reviews the biggest, best or most significant releases of the month. And our scores are based on one key measure: fun! It's that simple. Here's a breakdown:

1	WHY, GOD, WHY?
2	STINKS. NEVER PLAY THIS
3	A WASTE OF YOUR MONEY
4	MAYBE RENT, NEVER BUY
5	VERY AVERAGE
6	FAIRLY SOLID BUT NOWT SPECIAL
7	TASTY
8	QUALITY GAME. CONSIDER BUYING IT
9	CLASS ON A DISC
10	AN ABSOLUTE MUST THAT DEFINES THE GENRE

CVG AWARDS SYSTEM

These accolades don't get dished out just because a game gets a certain score. They're CVG's way of telling you which are our pet hates and personal favourites.

CVG ESSENTIAL
The most coveted award a game can get. It's worth buying the console to play the game

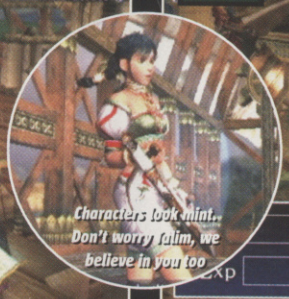
CVG RECOMMENDED
A damn good game. It may not break the mould, but it's a cut above the rest

CVG GAME OF THE MONTH
Doesn't have to be the highest scorer, but it's CVG's pick of the bunch this month

CVG STINKER
More abominable than a Yeti

SOULCALIBUR II

Virtually every move looks as good as this – it's that flash



Characters look mint.. Don't worry Talim, we believe in you too

Pirate badass Cervantes: not one to be humble in victory, then

GAME INFO ONLINE GAMING ● COST: £39.99 ● PLAYERS: 1-2 ● OUT: SEPTEMBER 26 ● PUB: EA (PS2, XBOX) NINTENDO (GC) ● DEV: NAMCO ● WWW.SOULCALIBUR2.COM

IT'S HERE AT LAST, AND GUNNING FOR VIRTUA FIGHTER 4'S COMBAT CROWN

If there was one game that Dreamcast owners used to bang on about all the time, it was Soulcalibur.

Namco's weapons-based beat 'em up was stupendously good-looking, played brilliantly and, thanks to the console's dismal sales, was enjoyed by about 17 people. All that is about to change, because now no matter which console you own you can all get a piece of Soulcalibur II.

From your first fight you can see why people cared. The four button controls are simple; there are horizontal and vertical weapon attacks, kick and block, but the fighters respond instantly and so fluidly that you'll soon discover a near endless stream of combos and flashy attacks.

MIDDLE-AGED FIGHTING

With a fictional setting based on Medieval Europe and Asia, the fighting arenas are a world away from the grimy alleyways and rooftops you normally see in beat 'em ups.

Instead, you do battle in magnificent surroundings including mountain-top temples and desert fortresses. All the stages are packed with detail and animation, and sometimes almost overshadow the fighters themselves.

PRETTY DANGEROUS

That's not to say that the characters are lacking in good looks. Hair and clothes flow in the wind, and the level of detail – from fencer Raphael's stylish leather trousers to Cassandra's intricate outfits – could make you wonder if the developers are more interested in fashion than fighting.

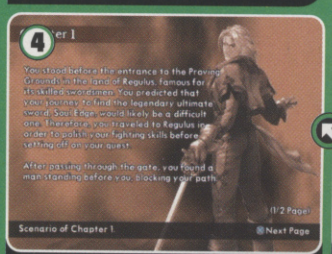
However, that's pretty unlikely, given the amount of effort that's been put into the art of duffing people up. Each character holds his or her own weapon, ranging from versatile

MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE

Weapon Master mode is like a whole extra RPG bolted onto the main game, and is the place to go if you want to unlock new characters, weapons, costumes, art, kitchen sinks, that kind of thing. We hope you like reading, though.

Each of the battles in Weapon Master mode has its own little scenario

Here you need to fight off a wave of enemies with just one power bar



Every chapter and even every fight is introduced with stacks of boring text. Why?

Some stages can be hazardous, like this damn treacherous quicksand

Is that a fight or a case of spontaneous human combustion?

Necrid: looks odd but is awesomely powerful in battle

Ivy's versatile chain slash sword is bad news for everyone

Voldo's moves are all as weird as his freaky fetish looks

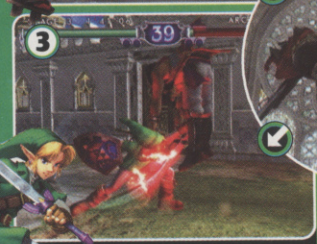
Decency prevents us from typing what we're thinking here.

EACH TO HIS OWN

It would have been really easy to just release the exact same game on all three consoles.

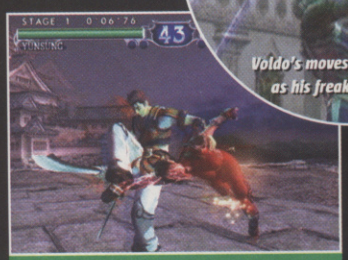
And really rubbish. So Namco has put unique extras into each version, including some familiar faces.

PS2 gets Tekken's Heihachi and the best control, thanks to the sensibly shaped Dual Shock



GameCube gets the best bonus character ever, in the shape of Nintendo hero Link!

Xbox gets posher graphics, and the slightly violent-looking comic book character, Spawn



Yunsung uses Taki to get that pesky chewing gum off his shoe. People can be filthy...

French fencer Raphael has a handy line in show-offy stabbing attacks. The big ponce

Soulcalibur II contains exquisite moments of comedy, like Yunsung's face here

No-one's chin is safe when Maxi and his nunchucks are around. Not even Gail off Coronation Street

Nightmare is literally Kilik's worst... over to you, to complete the caption. It's a tricky one

daggers or nunchucks to heavy broadswords and axes. Weapon type influences each character's style of play – will you leap around and attack in quick bursts or stand your ground and use strong slashes and blocks?

MASTER YOUR WEAPONS

After you've played through standard Arcade mode a few times, or beaten up a few mates in two-player Versus, you might be wondering what all the fuss is about. Soulcalibur II is a very, very good fighting game but beyond that there doesn't seem to be much to it. So explore the menu screen a little, and check out Weapon Master mode.

This is where the meat of Soulcalibur really lies, and it throws you into a much more complex story-based game where your chosen character must wander around an RPG-style map fighting in specific challenges. You might face time limits, whole hordes of enemies or even exploding stages, but the rewards are well worth the effort.

Play Weapon Master enough and you'll earn the majority of the game's hidden characters, the 12 extra weapons for each fighter, new costumes, artwork... we could go on.

Taken as a whole, it's clear that Soulcalibur II is pretty special. At its core is a stunning-looking, easy-to-play, if unrevolutionary fighting game. Add the endless thrills of versus fighting, and the almost bottomless depths of Weapon Master mode, and you get a big box of fighting fun that is almost on a par with the delights of Virtua Fighter 4 Evolution. If you prefer fighting with weapons instead of fists, Soulcalibur II wins hands-down.

computer and video games VERDICT

Hardly revolutionary, but as polished and rewarding as you'd want. Weapon Master mode adds near limitless depth and two-player mode is enough to keep you playing for months. **Steve F**

- + Looks obscenely good on all formats
- + Simple controls but piles of moves to learn
- + Versus mode will last you for years
- − Too much damn text in Weapon Master mode
- − Not a great deal of innovation, just fighting

8 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Tekken 4 (PS2), Dead Or Alive 3 (Xbox)

FREEDOM FIGHTERS™

GAME INFO | ONLINE GAMING | COST: £39.99 ● PLAYERS: 1-4 ● OUT: SEPTEMBER 19 ● PUB: EA ● DEV: IO INTERACTIVE ● WWW.FREEDOM-FIGHTERS.CO.UK

TIME TO BREAK OUT THE WEAPONS AND CAUSE MASS DESTRUCTION

Who would have guessed? Turns out the Americans were right after all and Communism is a true menace to world society.

Now the Red Army has swept across the globe and even the land of liberty has fallen to their military might. A small band of unorganised, dispossessed freedom fighters struggle against their oppressors but they lack a leader, someone to march them fearlessly into battle.

This, of course, is where you come in. Previously a humble plumber (not *that* one), you must find the strength and courage to lead your army against the Red Menace and re-establish truth, justice and the American way.

IT TAKES A NATION OF MILLIONS

Freedom Fighters' greatest strength lies in its simplicity. Anyone who has played Rainbow Six knows how complex and involving squad-based shooters can be; this does away with all the tricky controls and leaves you free to shoot the rampaging Russkis.

The sight of 12 of your recruits defending your position while you nip round the back to take out a machine-gun emplacement is a joy to behold. And if your army gets nailed, just recruit a new one – there is an almost never-ending supply of willing cannon fodder to choose from.

The only real niggle is that you have to control your group *en masse*. It would be nice if you could break them up and send half up the left and half up the right while you stormed through the middle. Also, the fact that there are only three basic commands for your squad, consisting of defend, follow and fall back, means you are a little limited in your attack options.

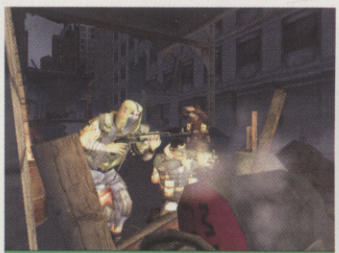
Overall, though, Freedom Fighters is a fun game, giving the blast fan a taste of what the strategists get up to but without having to read all those boring manuals.

Blast your way along to the sofa on the right, then treat yourself to a nice sit-down

That's a nice over-the-shoulder rocket launcher you're wearing

Some handily arranged chests mean you can do plenty of SAS-style ducking and diving about

Maybe not the best place to take pot shots... it's a bit exposed up there



If the Russkis had won the Cold War, you'd be wearing jeans like that too

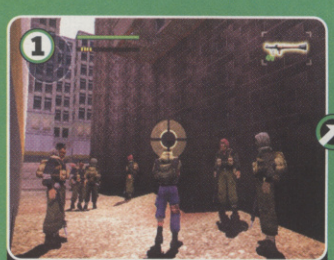
The Red Star means you're in Commie territory now. And the fact you're being shot at

So where's the rest of the team when you need them? Bunch of flaming skivers

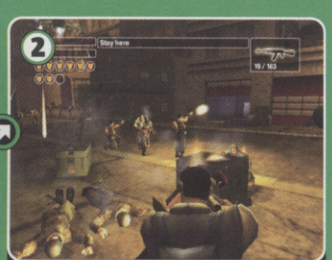
DEAD CHARMING

One of your key aims in Freedom Fighters – and the way to beat the Commies – is to recruit people to fight and, most likely, die alongside you.

As you rescue people and carry out missions successfully your charisma rating increases, allowing you to command more people. That means human shields for you, sir!



Recruit volunteers into the cause...



...Then take your army out into the fray

computer and video games VERDICT

Simple is often best: while some may wish for more control over the squad, most will find that this offers just the right amount of both wanton destruction and considered strategy. **Paul A**

- ■ Simple squad control puts the onus on blasting
- ■ Interplay between levels provides an added layer of strategy
- ■ Would have been great fun online
- ■ Squad-based element too simplistic for some

8 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... ■ Brute Force (Xbox), SOCOM (PS2), Rainbow Six (PC)

computer and video games
SPECIAL EDITION
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ZONE OF THE ENDERS

THE 2nd RUNNER

This is what happens when crossing swords goes horribly wrong

Dash sideways as quick as you can in order to avoid a head-on collision with the evil-looking mechanical phoenix

A disorientating interference effect fills the screen whenever you're hit

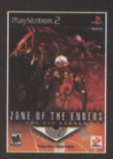
GAME INFO

ONLINE GAMING

COST: £39.99 ● PLAYERS: 1-2 ● OUT: SEPTEMBER

PUB: KONAMI ● DEV: KCEJ ● WWW.KONAMIJPN.COM

ZOE RETURNS, SHE'S HAD A MAKEOVER, AND SHE'S A KNOCKOUT!



Remember when you were little and used to beg your mum to buy you a box of Shredded Wheat for the free toy? Well that was kinda what happened when Zone Of The Enders first came out back in 2001.

Most people bought it for the free Metal Gear Solid 2 demo, you see. But once you'd squeezed every ounce of playtime possible out of the freebie's opening tanker stage, it made sense to take ZOE for a spin.

And guess what? It turned out to be the Crunchy Nut Cornflakes of arcade robot romps. As soon as you tucked in it was almost impossible to stop. We all gorged ourselves on its eye-popping visuals and uniquely insane action scenarios. Only it was all over in the blink of an eye.

Luckily that's not a problem this time round. Konami has super-sized the ZOE experience, making The 2nd Runner's main adventure significantly longer and harder than its baby brother's. Plus the new gigantic battles are so intense that your brain will haemorrhage, leak out of your nose and clog up all the buttons on your controller. Hate it when that happens.

THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT

Less than a minute into it and you're surrounded by more than 50 robots intent on crippling your chunky metal ass. Get used to it, because this is what The 2nd Runner is all about. Every level is jam-packed with elaborate, intense combat situations that call for gazelle-like reflexes if you hope to stay alive.

Fighting within whirlwinds of black smoke, debris and Technicolor sparks is sensational. It makes battles in the previous game look as tame as playground scraps.

There is a flipside, though: at times the fiery action is *so* chaotic and explosive that you lose track of what's going on. It's still enjoyable, but you can't help feeling a bit helpless and

When anything moves fast it leaves funky comic-book-style lines behind it

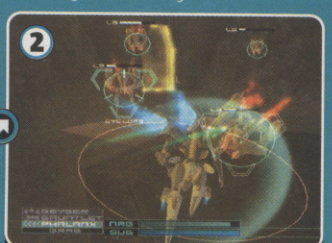
RECOMMENDED • CVG • RECOMMENDED

FOLLOW THE LEADER

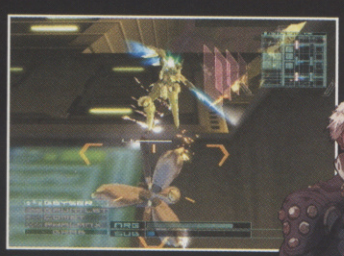
On certain levels in The 2nd Runner you will come up against Commander robots, which have the ability to call in reserve troops and form deadly squads.

If you manage to hunt them down and take them out early on, you will save yourself a lot of bother in the long run and limit the chances of receiving a harsh kicking.

The Commander can rally his troops into fierce fighting formations, which are much harder to defeat than random rogue robots



Identify the leader, lock onto him, and don't let up until he's out of the picture. Then it's much easier to defeat his troops

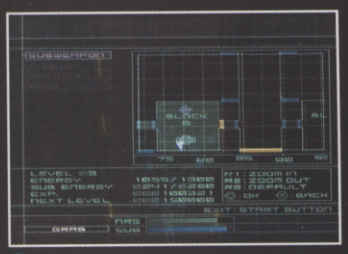


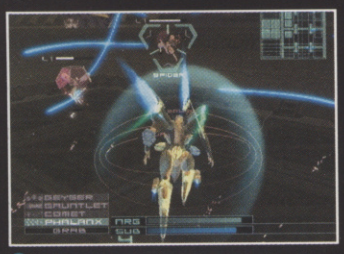
Sparks start to fly as you skid down the side of a building

Unfortunately Konami hasn't given us a free-roaming camera for the sequel

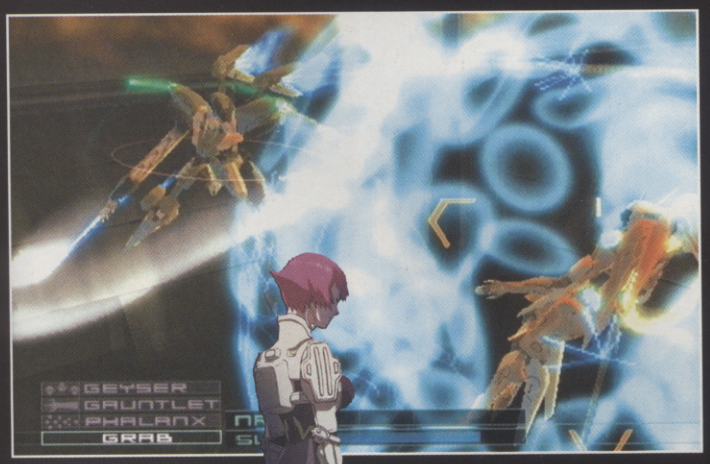
Hit the R1 button to scroll through your list of sub-weapons

New combo attacks enable you to pound enemies into the ground or fling 'em up into the sky

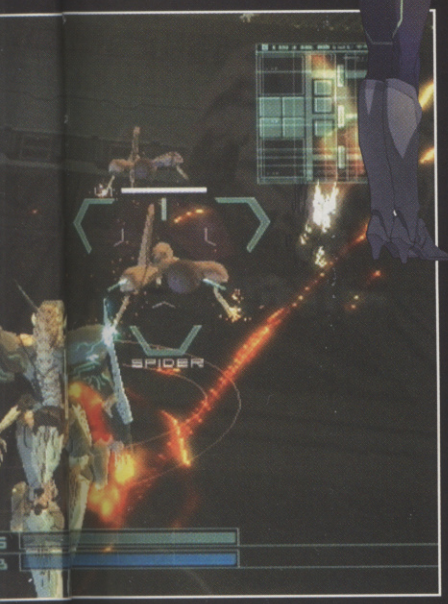

You now need to use your map regularly on missions. Otherwise you will just lose



You're safest when you keep enemies at a distance – but long-range attacks are weaker



Burst his bubble and charge in with a flurry of swashbuckling moves. That should show him!



out of control. And when things go totally bananas it can suffer from slight bouts of slowdown. Nonetheless, this is a trade-off you find yourself willing to accept because the whole thing looks so unbelievable.

PARANOID ANDROID

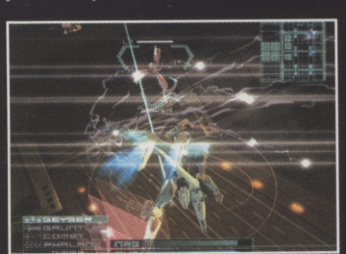
The large scale of the fights and drastically increased numbers of enemies have persuaded Konami to update the combat system for the better. Although all the fundamental controls from the last game remain the same, significant additions include your ability to attack tons of adversaries at once and the killer new sub-weapons earned on your interplanetary travels.

In most other mech games you're only interested in dealing with the foe nearest to you, but in The 2nd Runner every on-screen enemy poses a threat. That's why it's so exciting.

You're constantly strong-armed into keeping tabs on who's above, below and to the sides of you. The new multiple enemy lock-on function enables you to keep the hordes of evil robots at bay with a single blast. It couldn't really be any easier and the effects are astounding.

As for the 14 new sub-weapons, they're awesome. Each weapon possesses a unique ability that's perfectly suited to disabling, overpowering and disposing of specific enemies. This adds extra spice to the adventure because you're frequently forced to switch to a weapon that suits the situation.

But there's barely ever a moment to think. If you fail to equip the right piece of kit fast enough, chances are that you won't make it out alive. So start doing some brain exercises now.



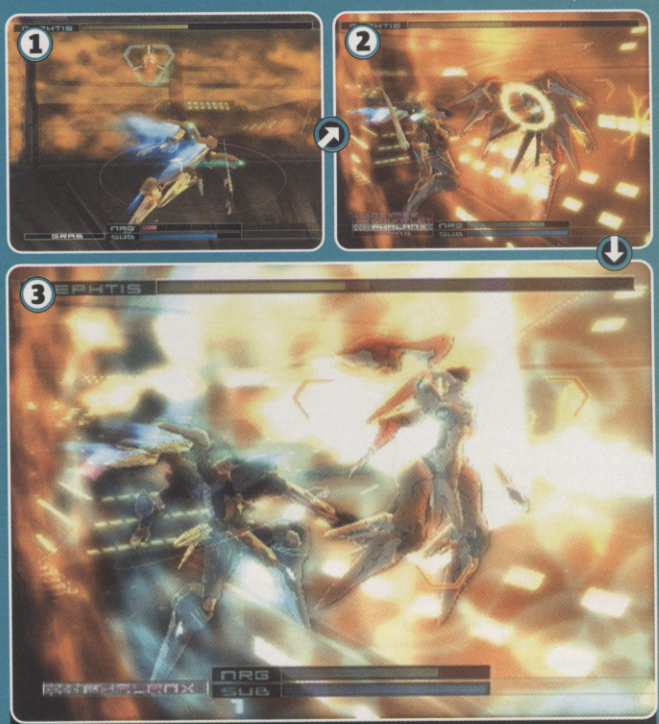
The Geyser sub-weapon is an effective immobiliser of anything it touches

PLUCK IT AND SEE

If it looks like you can pick something up and lob it, in The 2nd Runner you probably can.

Whenever there's an end-of-level boss fight you will find that your surroundings can prove just as deadly as your snazzy lasers.

Rip a solar panel off a nearby column. When he darts towards you use it as a shield and you'll render him unconscious for a moment. Strike while you've got the chance



Here you're enclosed by a giant electric cage. Your opponent is too powerful to take on blow for blow. So lure him in, wait for his attack, dodge and watch him stick to the electric barrier

FUN RUNNER

Veterans of the first ZOE game will love what Konami has done with the sequel. The combat is so much more dynamic and each stage now sees you solving puzzles and searching for clues as well as blasting away at enemy bots.

The storyline is that clichéd old chestnut of betrayal leading to revenge, but the way it all plays out in the stylish animé cutscenes gives the adventure a super-polished finish. In terms of gameplay, this scrumptious sci-fi sequel isn't doing anything revolutionary. But once you enter the blindingly atmospheric universe and taste the breakneck-paced action firsthand, you simply won't care.

computer and video games VERDICT

What a beaut this game is! It's probably the best-looking shooter out there on any console, and when it comes to riotous arcade fun it ticks all the right boxes. **Mike**

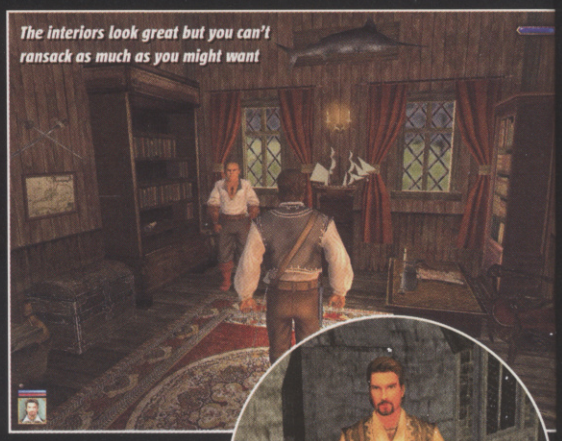
- Best-looking arcade robot game ever
- Immense and extreme sci-fi battles
- Tons of new sub-weapons
- More objective-based puzzles

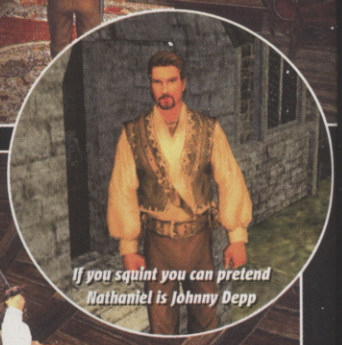
- No real surprises gameplay-wise
- Disappointing two-player mode

8 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Mobile Suit Gundam: Federation Vs Zeon (PS2)

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN


The interiors look great but you can't ransack as much as you might want


If you squint you can pretend Nathaniel is Johnny Depp

GAME INFO | ONLINE GAMING | COST: £39.99 | PLAYERS: 1 | OUT: NOW | PUB: UBI SOFT | DEV: AKELLA/BETHESDA SOFTWORKS | WWW.PIRATES.BETHSOFT.COM | PC CD ROM

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY SLAYING 'N' SWASHBUCKLING

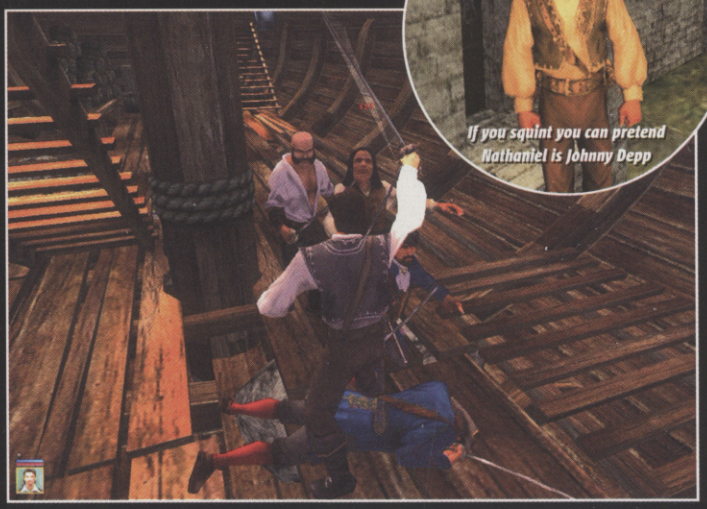
The tavern door creaks open and you stare blinking into the smoky gloom. On a mission to recruit new crew members you survey the drunks and smugglers propping themselves up at the bar.

Swaggering over, cutlass clanging against your belt buckles, you try to strike up a conversation. The gruff old coot won't talk to you unless you drink rum with him, so you knock a couple back. Next thing you know you're being shaken awake from your drunken stupor, all your gold now missing and weapons robbed. Arse.

MAL DE MER?

Pirates Of The Caribbean, as a freeform role-player, gives you an entire pirating world to explore and conquer, and a whole range of different ways to play. That's why you can go drinking with alcoholic grifters or draw your sword on innocents, if you so wish. Just be prepared to deal with the consequences of your actions.

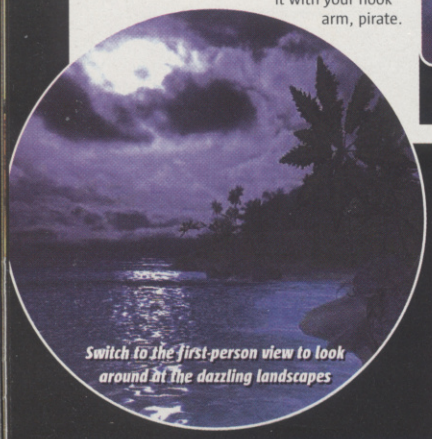
The main story is enormous, with dozens of side quests and branching storylines. There are trade routes to consider, allegiances to forge with different nations, and epic sea battles to wage with your fleet of majestic ships.


Using a fallen enemy's corpse for a quickstep aerobics session will only anger his mates

STATS AT SEA

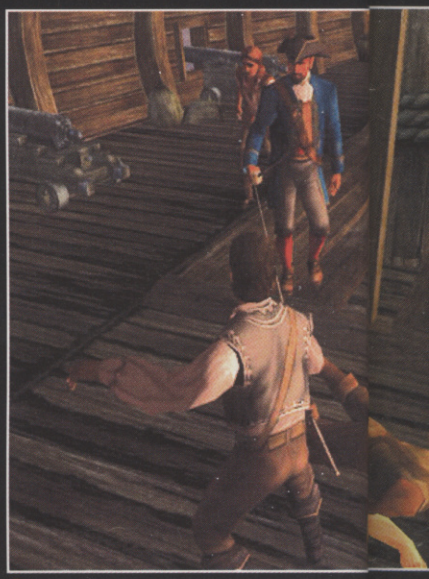
There's a lot to consider when you're planning your take-over of the world's seas.

You'll need to level up your leadership skills, run errands for important governors and form allegiances, plus plenty more that'll have you scratching your head. Just don't do it with your hook arm, pirate.


Switch to the first-person view to look around at the dazzling landscapes

We're not sure what Knippels are, but you probably shouldn't run out of them so stock up

Attacking guards is suicide, but it'll make the locals fear you if you do take them out


Sword combat is the game's weakest aspect and really could have been made a lot more of a laugh, so whip out your gun instead

What a beautiful vessel! Life on the ocean wave must have been rather pleasant between inconvenient encounters with rival bloodthirsty pirates

Your chest will swell with pride as your ship docks at a new port somewhere else in the huge and beautiful world

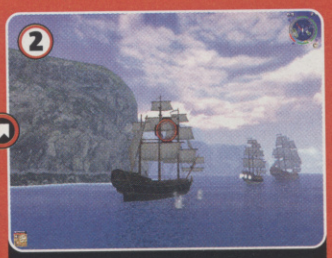
The storm weather effects are so spectacular that you might find yourself getting seasick

CANNONBALL RUN

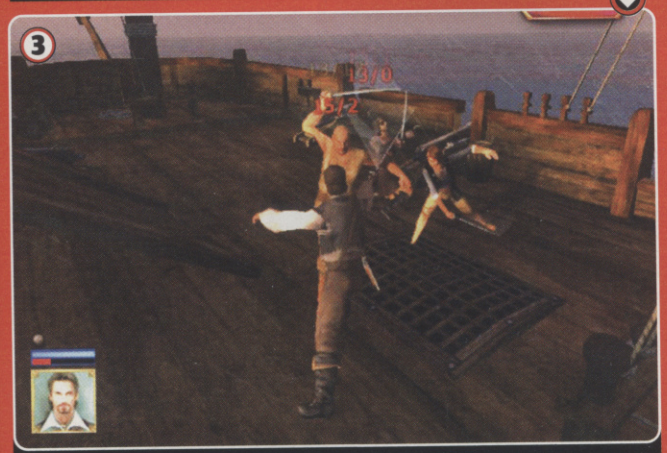
Perhaps Pirates's most standout feature is the sea battling.

You start with just one ship to command but as your reputation grows and your fleet expands, you will soon be engaging in awesome pitched battles with multiple vessels on the stormy seas. Battles are tough, but then life was hard in the 17th Century. Deal with it.

Cannon blasts take time between rounds so be sure to sail strategically



Handy targeting reticules help, but cannons aren't as fast or fatal as laser beams



Don't expect rival sailors to give up their vessels without putting up a fight first!

Towns are huge and there are so many of them to explore

Exploration is fairly slow-paced but mostly intriguing

Fogging rarely spoils the atmosphere

Not your average movie tie-in then. The reason? The movie licence has actually been applied to 'RPG at sea' Sea Dogs II. Consequently there's no Johnny Depp or Orlando Bloom, but you do get an interesting and original adventure that's occasionally too complex for its own good.

The sprawling nature of the game means that, for the most part, the pace is far slower than you might think acceptable. The sea battles are gorgeous but incredibly tough to master, and the sword fighting on land is clumsy and inaccurate.

The beautiful visuals, role-playing stat frenzy and the open-ended play will help many see past these flaws, but players expecting to relive rollicking scenes from the movie will be left all at sea with an unpleasant salty taste in their mouths.

CVG VERDICT

Its complexity will make you love it or hate it. Role-player fans will find it easy to ignore the occasional shortcoming in gameplay, but action gamers won't like this at all. **Lee**

- + It's so beautiful you'll start wearing a tunic
- + Freeform world where you can do as you please
- + Fab sea battles between whole fleets of ships
- − About as much to do with the film as bananas
- − Pace and complexity will confuse many gamers
- − Swordfighting could be a lot more fun

7 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Morrowind (Xbox, PC), Zelda: Wind Waker (GC)

AMPLITUDE

GAME INFO | ONLINE GAMING | COST: £39.99 | PLAYERS: 1-4 | OUT: OCTOBER 17 | PUB: SONY | DEV: HARMONIX | WWW.US.PLAYSTATION.COM/GAMES/SCUS-97258

HEAD-POPPIN' BLOCK-ROCKIN' BEATS

Win then release the Autoblaster and it'll activate a whole track for you

Like its predecessor Frequency, Amplitude is the rhythm action game for players too cool for skool. There are no cartoon visuals, no rapping dogs, and nary a disco-dancing, mini-skirt-wearing, foxy newscaster to be seen. Pity.

What you do get, however, is a bunch of nu-metal grungy electro ravey tracks that would upset your gran and the sort of futuristic visuals that wouldn't look out of place in an Eighties sci-fi flick.

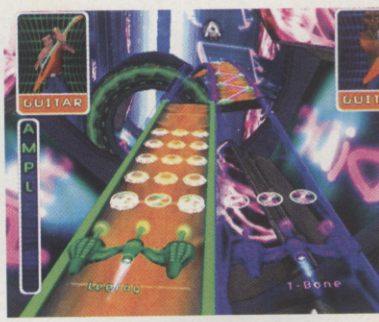
JIVE TALKING

We want to be scathing about Amplitude's self-consciously cool artist line-up, its supposedly hip and trippy visuals and the fact that it is everything that quirky Japanese rhythm action isn't – but we just can't do it. Amplitude is awesome. Play is essentially the same as the first game (build and layer the individual tracks of each song by striking one of three buttons on the correct beat) but with added power-ups to spice up the action.

Most importantly, Amplitude adds online play to the mix. Multiplayer rhythm action is a very different animal from the single-player track-building gameplay, and is based on point-scoring and scuppering your rivals with power-ups. As such this almost feels like two great games in one.

Add to this a remix mode where you can make P.O.D. sound even better than normal (that's irony, by the way) and you've got a great game, lack of J-pop or not.

Link tracks without missing a beat to earn yourself important point multipliers



Challenge your rival to match your beats

Earn the Freestyle power-up and the screen will go all ker-azy. Keep some aspirin handy

CVG VERDICT

With its slick production and online play Amplitude is possibly the finest rhythm action title yet created, but it does lack that quirky sense of bonkers musical fun. **Lee**

- + A rhythm action game that's 'cool' to play
- + Equally fun as a game and a remix tool
- + Create your own avatar and jive away online
- − No pop music to cheese along to!
- − Essentially more of the same of the first game
- − The swirly-whirly visuals may induce a migraine

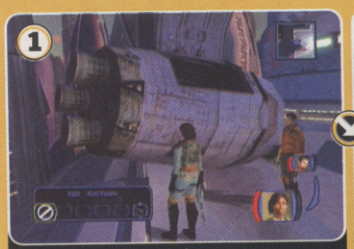
8 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Gitaroo Man (PS2), Mad Maestro (PS2)

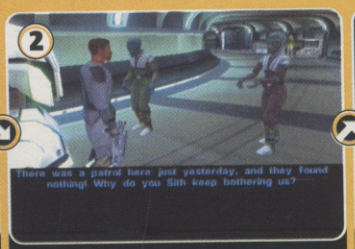
LIFE'S A BITCH AND THEN JEDI

Choosing to be either a Scout, Scoundrel or a Soldier – a stint at the Jedi Academy comes later – you begin the game aboard a ship being hunted by the Sith.

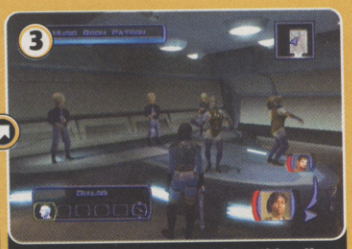
Boarded by their sword-swinging shock troops you escape via an escape pod to the planet below where the plan is to locate and rescue a high-ranking Jedi. But the Sith are blockading the planet and local Swoop gangs fighting across the Undercity. It's clear your task isn't going to be the easiest.



We have a problem: it looks like someone else got to the Jedi's escape capsule first

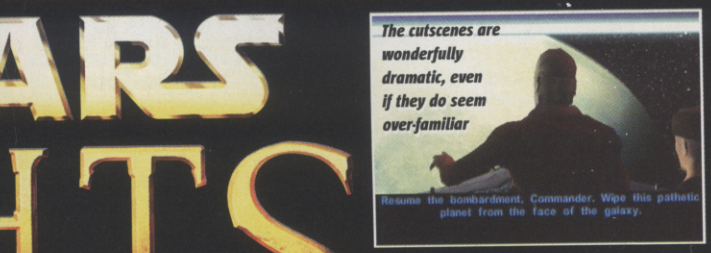


Taros's Upper City is mainly a safe enough place. Kit yourself out at the shops

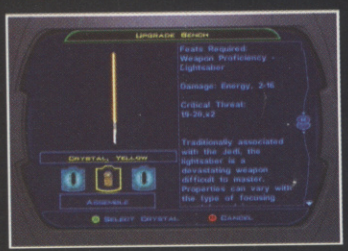


Once you've managed to acquire a Sith uniform you can explore the Lower City

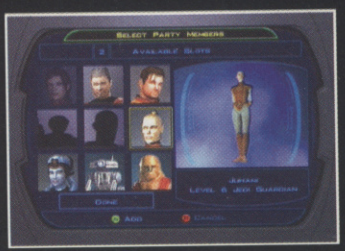
STAR WARS KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC



The cutscenes are wonderfully dramatic, even if they do seem over-familiar

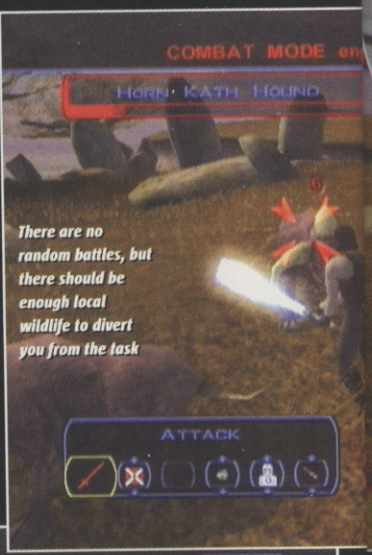


Use the workbenches to upgrade your weapons, armour and equipment



Eight others will eventually join you, but only three can be in use at any one time

Spend any experience points on new feats and force powers to help you on your way



There are no random battles, but there should be enough local wildlife to divert you from the task

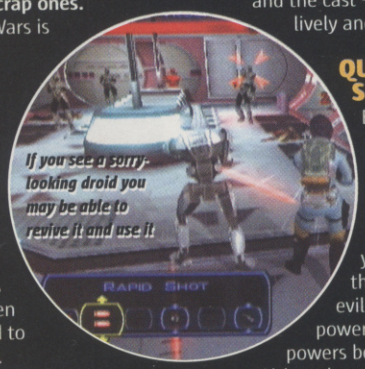
GAME INFO ONLINE GAMING ● COST: £39.99 ● PLAYERS: 1 ● OUT: SEPTEMBER 19 ● PUB: LUCASARTS/ACTIVISION ● DEV: BIOWARE CORP ● WWW.LUCASARTS.COM/PRODUCTS/SWKOTOR

A VERY, VERY LONG TIME AGO IN A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY

There have been close to 60 different games set in the Star Wars galaxy. As the years go by, the number of classic titles is slowly being dwarfed by an ever-ascending pile of crap ones.

On Xbox Star Wars is particularly poorly represented; the Starfighter games were okay, but who can forget Clone Wars? More to the point, who can forgive Obi-Wan? Thankfully, though, Star Wars gaming hasn't been completely turned to the Dark Side. Yet.

Coming from Baldur's Gate creator BioWare – perhaps the beardiest games developer on the entire planet – it will be something of a pleasant surprise to hear that KOTOR is far from being a stat-heavy slab of boredom. In fact, the game is closer to classic Final Fantasy in many ways: the storyline is fast, fun and focused, the adventure itself is big, the combat spectacular and strategic and the cast – even the droids – lively and likeable.

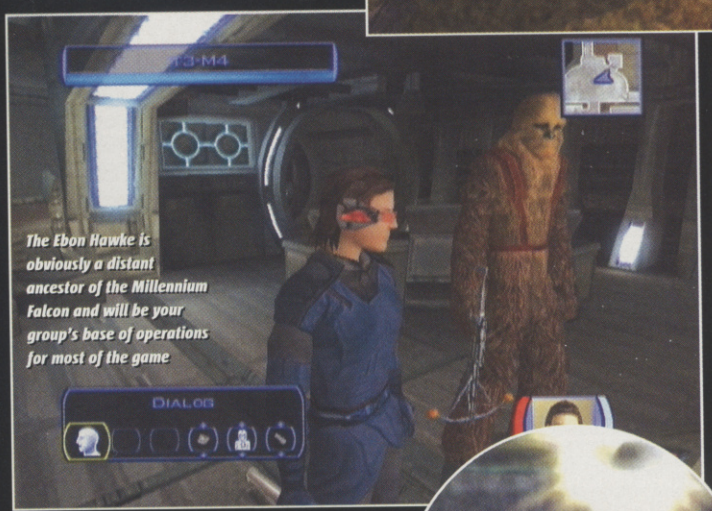


If you see a sorry-looking droid you may be able to revive it and use it

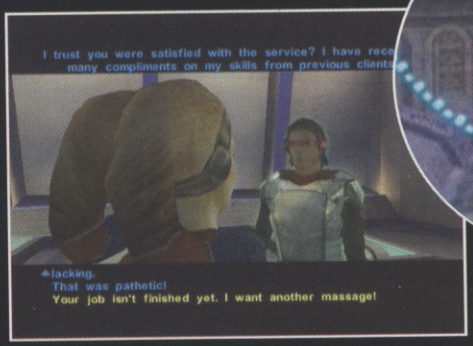
QUICKER, MORE SEDUCTIVE

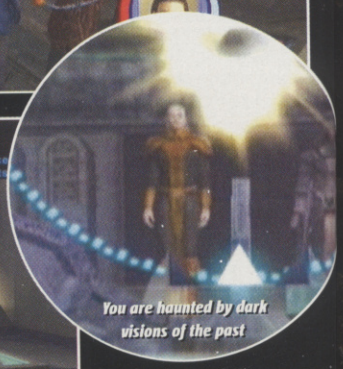
Best of all, you can choose to follow the Light or Dark path. Join the Sith and you get to lie, cheat and murder your way through the game. The more evil you are, the more powerful your Dark Force powers become.

Although you won't be cackling quite so much, playing a goody two-shoes is just as much fun with a range of different subquests to complete,



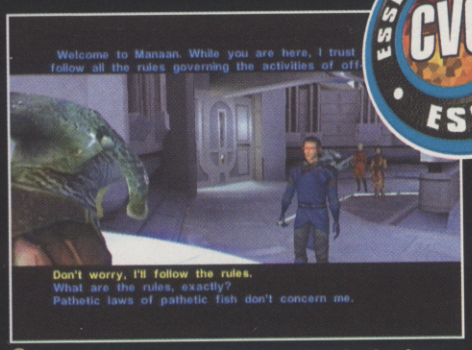
The Ebon Hawke is obviously a distant ancestor of the Millennium Falcon and will be your group's base of operations for most of the game



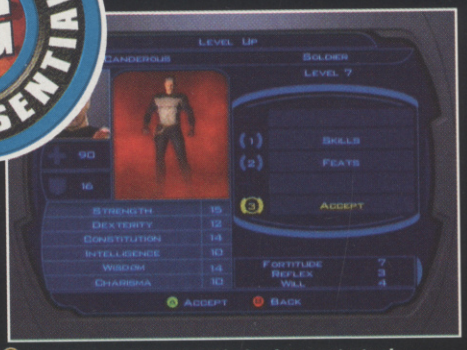


You are haunted by dark visions of the past

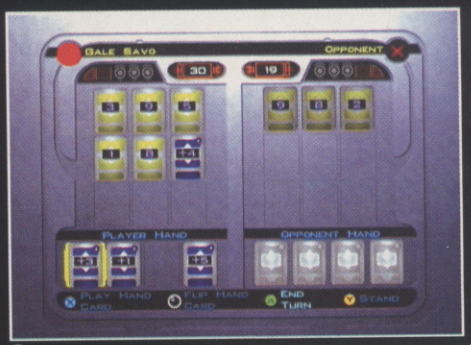
Someone should ban this sick filth now, for the sake of our children's innocence!



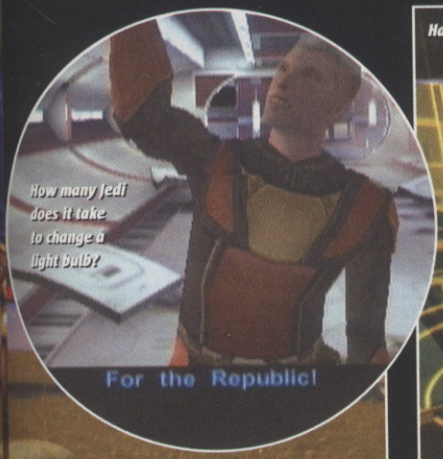
Explore Dantooine, the Wookie homeworld Kashyyyk and more

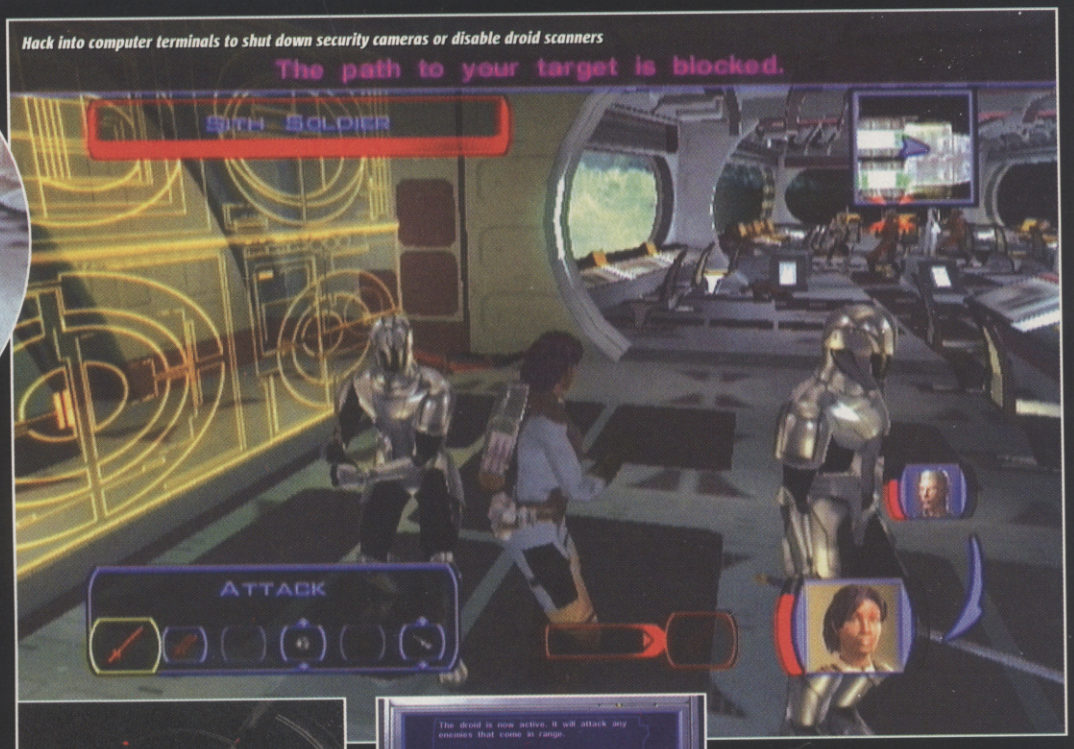


His red aura indicates that this chap has a nasty streak

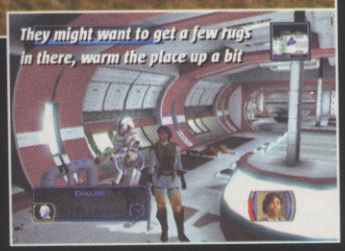


KOTOR features a number of mini-games in another nod to FF

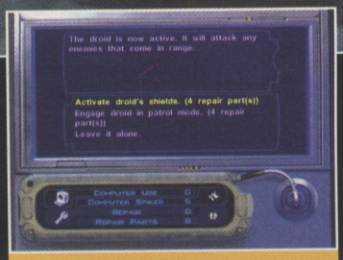




Hack into computer terminals to shut down security cameras or disable droid scanners



Shoot down a few Sith fighters along your way, but don't get cocky, kid



Droids: pets, KOTOR-style. If you have enough parts, patch 'em up and send them on patrol

GET SHOOTING AND LOOTING

Combat is a clever mix of real-time and turn-based. If you like it old skool, you can pause the action as often as you like to reposition your party, reset targets or queue special moves, attacks or Force powers.

Real-time fans, meanwhile, can turn off pausing altogether and sweat it through some spectacular set pieces.

It's an easy system to master, whatever your preferences, and although early on the range of attacks is pretty limited, the combat becomes much more intense and varied as the game progresses and Jedi begin to join your party. With dozens of weapons, Force powers and special moves to use, no one encounter is ever the same.

Until you build a lightsaber, vibroswords will have to do

As always, two Jedi are a lot more use than one

people to save and, of course, more fluffy, friendly Force powers to explore.

Our only real concern is that it takes a few hours of constant play before you get to feel the Force for yourself. Battles early on are simple and mercifully quick gunfights; it's only later on that you get to run around like a crazed gymnast, dual lightsabers aglow while from behind your Jedi chums are hurling balls of Force energy into the enemy ranks.

Despite the lack of our favourite characters, spaceships and vehicles, KOTOR manages to retain all that was good about Star Wars, with Jedi duels aplenty and a storyline that puts Attack Of The Clones to shame. Star Wars' glorious past has been brought to life with style – better than we could have hoped after playing recent Star Wars efforts – and with new content planned via Xbox Live, the Old Republic has a promising future. CVG

computer and video games VERDICT

The first ever Star Wars RPG isn't just the finest role-player available on Xbox, it's the best game the console's seen all year and in time will surely be as revered as Halo. Yes, it's that good. **Richie**

- Fantastic story and unrivalled dialogue
- Spectacular combat
- Enjoyable mini-games break up the story
- It takes a few hours of play before you actually get to use the Force
- Bit jerky at busy moments

9 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Neverwinter Nights (PC), Dark Chronicle (PS2)

EA SPORTS™ TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR® 2004

GAME INFO | ONLINE GAMING | COST: £39.99 | PLAYERS: 1-16 | OUT: SEPTEMBER 26 | PUB: EA | DEV: EA, HEADGATE (PC) | WWW.EA.COM

GOLF'S NUMBER ONE SUPERSTAR SHAVES EVEN MORE SHOTS OFF PAR

EA Sports's games are a bit like Tiger's golf swing – pretty much the same every time but constantly improving and raking in ridiculous amounts of money.

It's all about consistency – taking what is effective and making it even better. This year improvements to the tour are seven new courses, five new players and some new play modes, including online PC and PS2 play.

All fairly superficial stuff, then, but when the package is this complete already, it's all a bonus.

Players react to good and bad shots

SWING WHEN YOU'RE WINNING

The major improvement here is a greater concentration on the Career modes. You can create a golfer with the enhanced player editor and take him out on the course to tame the tiger. It's truly rewarding and the licensing means that you can attain sponsorship and spend your money on some real golfing equipment.

The control system also builds on those of its predecessors. Tiger Woods 2002 redefined control methods in videogame golf, using a swing of the analog stick to imitate the timing, precision and rhythm of a real golf swing. This feature adds untold depth for those prepared to put in the hours of practice out on the range, since real masters can put fade and slice on their shots.

The best way to describe TW 2004 is, just like Tiger's swing, reliable. It remains on top of the golf game leaderboard and is dropping even further under par every year.

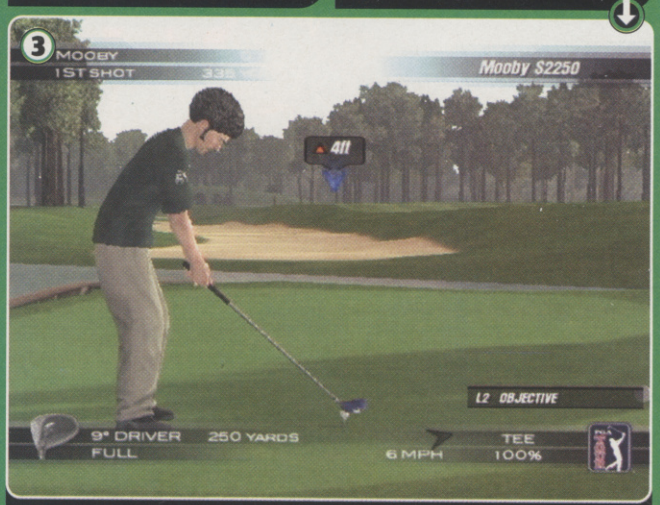
AIM FORE THE TOP

The Career mode has been overhauled, allowing you a great deal more freedom and the chance to take your unique golfer to the top of the PGA rankings.

Get yourself out on the course, earn some cash, then mosey on down to the pro shop to equip yourself with some sweet new gear.

You can look however you want – handy for PC and PS2 online play. (The Nescafe ad shoot's that way, by the way)

They've included a ridiculous amount of licensed gear – stuff that you could actually buy in a real golf store

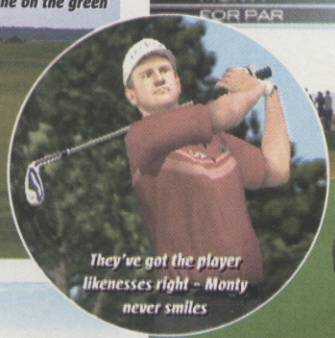


Try out your new threads on the course and prepare to conquer the golfing world

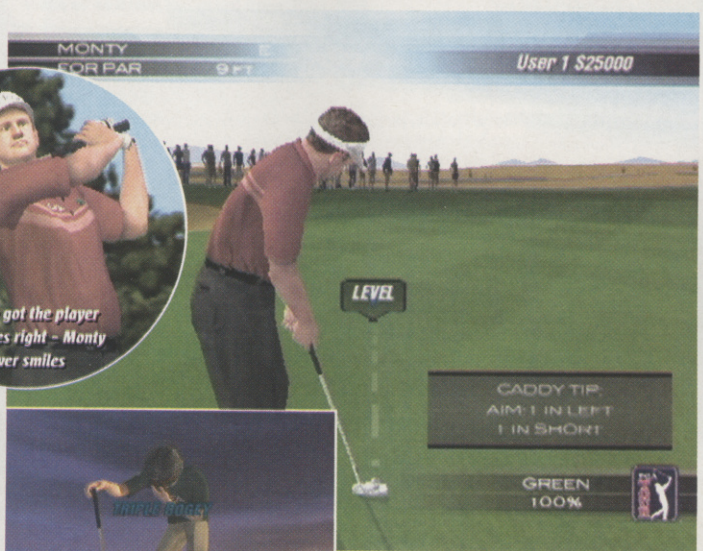
Tiger prepares to dig one out of the deep stuff

You have to wonder how much better golf games can get than this latest TW update

Newcomer big John Daly squares up to thump one on the green

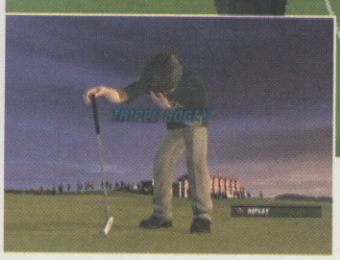


They've got the player likenesses right – Monty never smiles

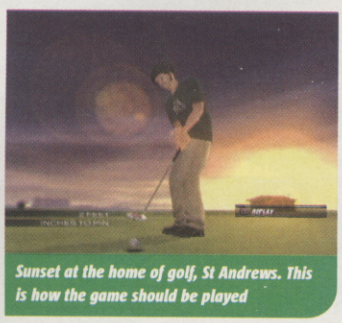


The putting system is still a bit awkward but you'll get a feel for it in the end

Almost makes you wish you were outside and not playing videogames... nah



Sometimes a really good nose-pick can pay off



Sunset at the home of golf, St Andrews. This is how the game should be played

computer and video games VERDICT

Like the man himself, TW 2004 takes golf to a new level. The extra content just about makes the purchase worthwhile, but how can you keep improving on a hole-in-one? **Graeme**

- ■ Great, sophisticated control system
- ■ Golf course atmosphere captured brilliantly
- ■ Loads of different players and a whole shop full of cool upgrades
- ■ Not a significant improvement from last year
- ■ Golf is slow and repetitive by nature

8 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... ■ Tiger Woods 2003 (PS2), Mario Golf (GC)

MORTAL KOMBAT TOURNAMENT EDITION

Mrs Tsung's won't be happy when she see this mess

Pass the flaming-hot parcel was a favourite game at Shang Tsung's parties

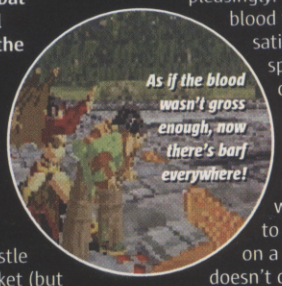
There are hundreds of special moves and combos to discover and get to grips with

GAME INFO ONLINE GAMING ● COST: £29.99 ● PLAYERS: 4 ● OUT: SEPTEMBER 5 ● PUB: MIDWAY ● DEV: MIDWAY ● WWW.MIDWAY.COM

FOUR-PLAYER KARNAGE LEAVING BLOODSTAINS ALL OVER YOUR GBA

Funny how times change. The first Mortal Kombat provoked all kinds of anger thanks to the intense violence and copious amounts of blood. We like nothing better than ripping out spinal columns, so it kept us happy.

Ten years on and you can carry all the blood, intestines, organs and gristle of MK around in your pocket (but it won't do your trousers any good).



AN OFFAL LOT OF BLOOD

This edition is an update of the recent Deadly Alliance release, and allows you to indulge in four-player link-ups with your pals. You can battle solo or in a tag team, and there's a new betting system so you can wager koins on the outcome of a battle. On top of that there are a few new characters and some new backgrounds.

The fighting system remains unchanged. It feels nice and heavy, and the excellent sound effects accentuate the impact of each hit pleasingly. There's also enough blood to keep Dracula satisfied for a lifetime; splattering generously over the floor.

It's all good, dirty, ultra-violent, blood-soaked fun. The only main problem is whether you will want to splash out more koins on a multiplayer mode that doesn't come bundled with three pals, three GBAs and three copies of the game. CVG

computer and video games VERDICT

Solid fighting action that makes impressive use of the GBA and offers a hefty challenge, but underneath all the gore this isn't much more than an upgrade of the last game. **Graeme**

- ■ Impressive graphics and animation
- ■ Bone-crunching, blood-splatting sound effects
- ■ Loads of characters and moves

- ■ Not much improvement on last GBA version
- ■ GBA controls don't work well for fighting games
- ■ Could turn you into a bloodthirsty maniac

7 OUT OF TEN

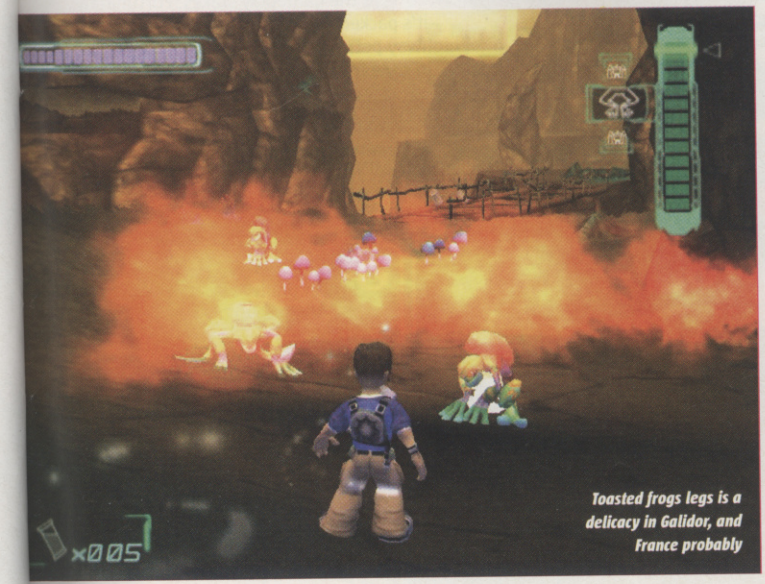
IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THIS... ■ Street Fighter Alpha 3 Upper (GBA)

GALIDOR™

DEFENDERS OF THE OUTER DIMENSION

ROCK-HARD PLATFORMER THAT WILL MAKE YOU WANT TO LEGO OF YOUR JOYPAD AND CRY

GAME INFO ONLINE GAMING ● COST: £29.99 (GC, PS2) £24.99 (PC) ● PLAYERS: 1 ● OUT: SEPTEMBER 19 ● PUB: EA ● DEV: ASYLUM GAMES ● WWW.ASYLUM-ENTERTAINMENT.COM/GALIDOR



Toasted frogs legs is a delicacy in Galidor, and France probably

We remember the days when Lego was all about building little towns with police stations, an ice cream shop and, if you were rich, that train set that actually worked. Now it's all inter-dimensional warfare. What is the world coming to?

Galidor is a new Lego spin-off. A third-person platformer, it sees you taking control of 15-year-old Nick, who can absorb enemy powers. The lucky chap can sprout a pair of frog's legs to jump higher, use a winch arm to swing across chasms, or grow a moustache so you can buy beer and fags from the corner shop. Er, that last one was a lie.

We'd like a laser cannon for an arm too...

Peter Andre stars in his first videogame role

BRICKING IT

So: nice, harmless platform fun. But there's a dark secret lurking under Galidor's surface – it has some bits that are harder than Mike Tyson's knuckles, and not in a good way. We're not talking keep-trying-till-you-get-it hard – it's just more annoying than a fly in your bum crack. The camera doesn't help and often turns what should be a simple leap into a frustrating optical illusion.

It's a shame because those who enjoy Galidor will get annoyed by the difficulty level, and everyone else will play one of the better platformers that are already out there. CVG

computer and video games VERDICT

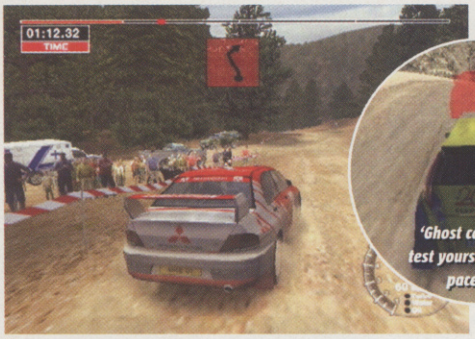
Not necessarily a bad game, but it's a bit like the ginger one in Girls Aloud – she looks friendly enough, but you would rather play with the others. **Graeme**

- ■ Cool power-ups
- ■ Big levels and challenging leaps

- ■ When will they fix that camera?
- ■ The difficulty level is out of kilter with the target audience

6 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... ■ Jak And Daxter (PS2), Mario Sunshine (GC)



'Ghost cars' let you test yourself against a pace-setter

Changing gears can be set at automatic, semi-automatic or manual

This Mitsubishi narrowly avoids a crowd of startled spectators

04™

colin mcrae rally

KING OF THE HILL

Unlock the 'Expert' Rally Championship and witness videogame realism being taken to the next level.

As well as making the in-car view and manual gear changes compulsory, it features the most unsympathetic of race times and severe of damage levels. Eek!

Being a soft touch for realism, the 'Expert' mode locks you into the 'in-car' view. Just like driving for real, eh?

GAME INFO

ONLINE GAMING

COST: £39.99 ● PLAYERS: 1-4 ● OUT: SEPTEMBER 19

PUB: CODEMASTERS ● DEV: CODEMASTERS ● WWW.CODEMASTERS.COM/COLINMCRAERALLY04

THE PERENNIAL RALLY RACING KING SERIES RETURNS TO RECLAIM ITS CROWN IN STYLE

These days, there are probably more racing games than cars on the roads. Wandering into the driving section of your local games store can be like staring out across an M25 pile-up.

Some might question the endless quest of developers to add to a vastly saturated genre. Others, CVG included, simply subscribe to the spectacular Colin McRae series and thank God for the wonders of gaming.

When the harshest criticism you can dish out to a game is that it suffers from excruciatingly slow loading times, you know it must be good. Except that CMR04 isn't just good, it's the videogame equivalent of a Lamborghini showroom. And by that we mean the very top end of the market.

I FEEL THE NEED...

Even if you own the previous outings, you can't fail to be impressed by this latest offering. It boasts so many new gameplay modes that any review is in danger of reading like a press release.

Firstly, starring as good old Colin is no longer compulsory – instead you create your own tyre-squealing maniac to give the revered Scotsman a race for his dosh. And to say there is a plethora of race modes would be a tragic understatement.

Championships devoted to 2WD, 4WD and classic rally cars all rear their humble heads, along with quick races, split-screen face-offs, customisable country rallies, 'ghost car' challenges and cooperative or competitive multiplayer championships for up to four players (racing alternately).

Challenge-wise, it's as tough as ever too. Two immediately accessible difficulty levels determine how much punishment your car can take before transforming into a broken heap of smouldering metal. However, beat the best and as well as unlocking new cars, you'll also uncover the no-holds-barred ultra-realism of the 'Expert' mode. Saves taking your dad's Ford for a spin in the local forest, then...

'Special' races pit you in a twin-lane face-off against a competitor

THE NEED FOR SPEED

Of course, all this would be immaterial if CMR04 disappointed in the gameplay stakes. Fortunately, it's packed with more juice than a row of highway petrol stations. Despite failing to differ in style from its predecessors, it boasts

Courses include Sweden, Japan, USA, Finland, Greece, Australia and the UK

Watch out for tractors and scarecrows on this English farm

Race your motor through the green, green grass of home in this stage set in Britain

SCRAP HEAP CHALLENGE

One of the highlights of this game is the improved damage modelling.

Your car can develop all sorts of problems and it's not unknown for body parts to fly off following a hastily taken bump. Fortunately, your mechanics have a chance (within a limited time period) to repair your vehicle in between stages.

A 360° camera lets you survey your wreckage prior to each race stage

Drive too recklessly and windows crack, smoke billows, engines stall...

PART-TIME RACER

With a variety of different terrain (be it the slippery snowscapes of Sweden or the harsh dirt tracks of America), tinkering your car to suit different courses is essential.

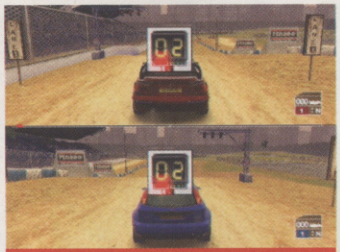
You can play around with everything from tyre grip to the brake ratio, which has a significant effect on the way your car handles.

A series of 'Parts Testing' mini-games enable you to compete for improved car technology

Prepare for different terrain by modifying your car's tyres, brakes, steering, gears, ride height...

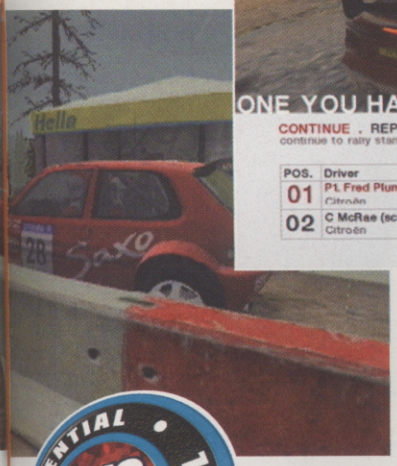
...And then give your souped-up rally beast a run-out in the trial 'Shakedown' sections

This spectator looks like he'd rather be watching the footie



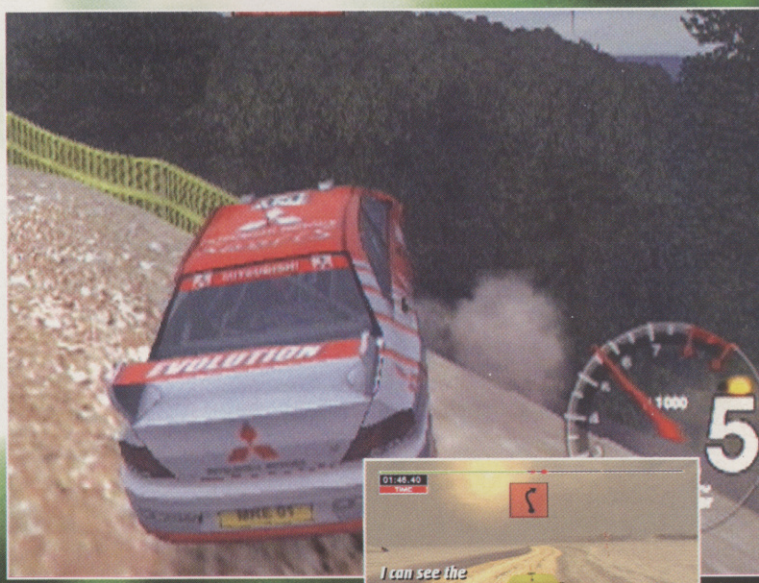
The split-screen options allow two racers to go at it in a head-to-head clash

You are given a limited amount of time for repairing your car between stages

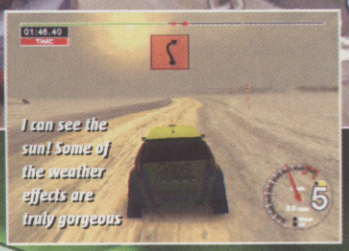


In yer face, McRae! Our very own Fred Plum scoops gold in the American rally

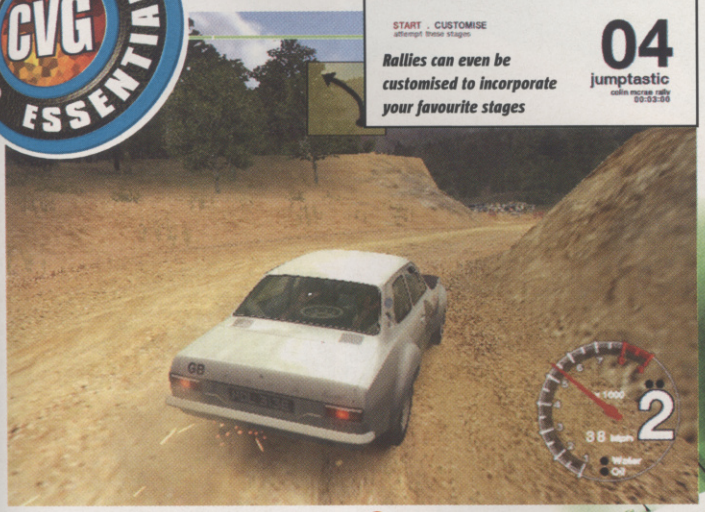
Rallies can even be customised to incorporate your favourite stages



Over the edge you go! A nasty cliff drop beckons for this rusty amateur



I can see the sun! Some of the weather effects are truly gorgeous



There is a wealth of cars to unlock, including this ugly Escort

subtle improvements in just about every area imaginable.

It looks nicer (excellent terrain and weather effects), feels more real (skidding over gravel feels like you're actually skidding over gravel), handles sweeter (astonishing car physics) and basically conjures up a whole load of small but noticeable touch-up jobs to ensure that CMR04 is one of the most compelling racers around at the moment.

So, is there anything bad at all that we can say about CMR04? Well, we scoured and searched, and aside from the frustratingly slow loading times (on the PS2 version), the only thing that really annoyed us was that smashing head-first into a tree didn't result in a glorious, Technicolor explosion. But then maybe you just can't have it all.

Games VERDICT

Subtle improvements in all areas plus tons of new gameplay modes and cars mean that CMR04 is a giant. Even if you own the previous games, this is essential if you're serious about driving. **Stephen**

- + Covers just about every single area of the sport
- + So much depth and challenge
- + Looks great, handles like a dream
- + Ultra-realistic, ultra-engrossing, ultra-fantastic!
- − Those lethargic loading times!
- − Crashing doesn't feel like crashing

9 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE ■ RalliSport Challenge (Xbox) ■ MotoGP2 (Xbox)

CAPCOM
NINTENDO GAMECUBE
www.PN03.co.uk

Exquisite Execution

"Stylish and addictive. A cracking shooter." Cube Magazine

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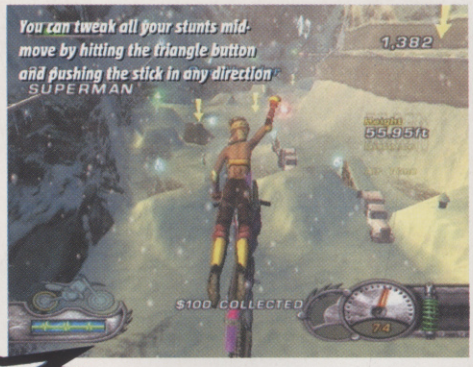
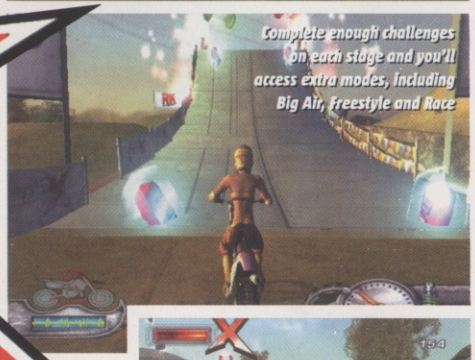
That old Evel Knievel truck-jumping stunt is here in its full glory



You can tweak all your stunts mid-move by hitting the triangle button and pushing the stick in any direction

Like girls talking dirty to you? Well there's plenty of that going on

FMX


Complete enough challenges on each stage and you'll access extra modes, including Big Air, Freestyle and Race

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

Nowhere is off limits when you've got a turbo-charged mechanical bicycle clamped between your thighs.

There are no invisible barriers in FMX, so feel free to pull stunts off anything you can see. If it seems unreachable at first, persevere, for there *is* a way up there.

A well-timed boost off a hidden bump and you're up there

One challenge is to fly through that chopper's belly. There is a way!

GAME INFO

ONLINE GAMING

● COST: £39.99 ● PLAYERS: 1 ● OUT: SEPTEMBER 16
● PUB: MIDWAY ● DEV: DEIBUS STUDIOS ● WWW.MIDWAY.COM

IT'S DOING ITS TONY HAWK IMPRESSION. BUT NOT VERY WELL

REVIEWER
MIKE COOPER

Déjà vu – spooky! Haven't we seen all this before? Feels like it. Freestyle Metal X is yet another in a long line of extreme sports wannabes, shamelessly repackaging the Tony Hawk experience. Only this time you're on a scrambler bike instead of a skateboard, so it's bound to be a whole different story... isn't it? Oh.

All the old favourites are on the menu: cue giant free-roaming levels, quirky stunt-based challenges and Lemmy from Motörhead growling The Ace Of Spades in the background.

It's even taken a few tips from the BMX XXX school of charm, with silicone-stuffed bikini babes squeaking crap sexual innuendos at you as you scoot past. It's all old hat.

The reason the Tony Hawk games are always streets ahead of the competition is because they always push the boundaries of this sort of game. Just check out THUG if you're looking for the proof. In contrast FMX, although a fast and fun mindless muck-about, doesn't bring anything significantly new to the scene.

NOW YOU'RE JUST SHOWING OFF

Midway's muddy pup is technically sound, with decent dirt bike physics. As you're on a motorbike it feels faster than most other extreme stunt 'em ups, but the exhilarating sensation of speed comes at a price.

Travelling everywhere at hyper-speed means that there's no opportunity for stringing together lots of awesome intricate little moves.

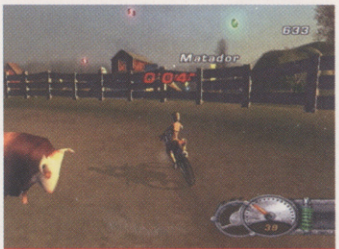
It's all big ramps, big air and big stunts. Pulling off enormous combos is a cinch because the manual Wheelies and Stoppies that link tricks are dead easy to balance. While this will appeal to born show-boaters, true extreme sports fans won't find the lightweight action challenging.

THE OPEN ROAD

What is impressive about FMX is that when you unlock a new level it joins jigsaw-like to the previous one. So once you open up all eight areas on the world map, you can zip between each enormous area seamlessly. You don't have to wait for a new level to load. Just tear from lush green countryside to busy urban streets and onto mountainous snow-covered stunt parks without interruption.

Still, even with this cool feature FMX hasn't got what it takes to cut it with the big boys. It doesn't deliver the kind of gut-wrenching adrenalin rush that you expect from a top-drawer extreme sports game.

Once you open all the arenas you can race without fear of hitting a single loading screen



To avoid the bulls in this challenge just drive leisurely around the edge of the ring

Keep the throttle fired up until your boost bar turns red, then release the brake and you'll be catapulted into motion at breakneck speed

Multiplier tablets will give you a sick score if you hit them

computer and video games VERDICT

Though fast and flamboyant, FMX fails to drive us into a dangerous new realm of extreme action. In fact, the lack of originality means that it's stuck on the road to nowhere. **Mike**

- ■ Provides a gigantic and seamless biker's playground to explore
- ■ Good handling and instinctive controls

- ■ Stale challenges
- ■ Crap characters
- ■ No elaborate little ground tricks

5 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... ■ Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4 (PS2), SSX Tricky (PS2)

The UK's Number 1 Nintendo Magazine

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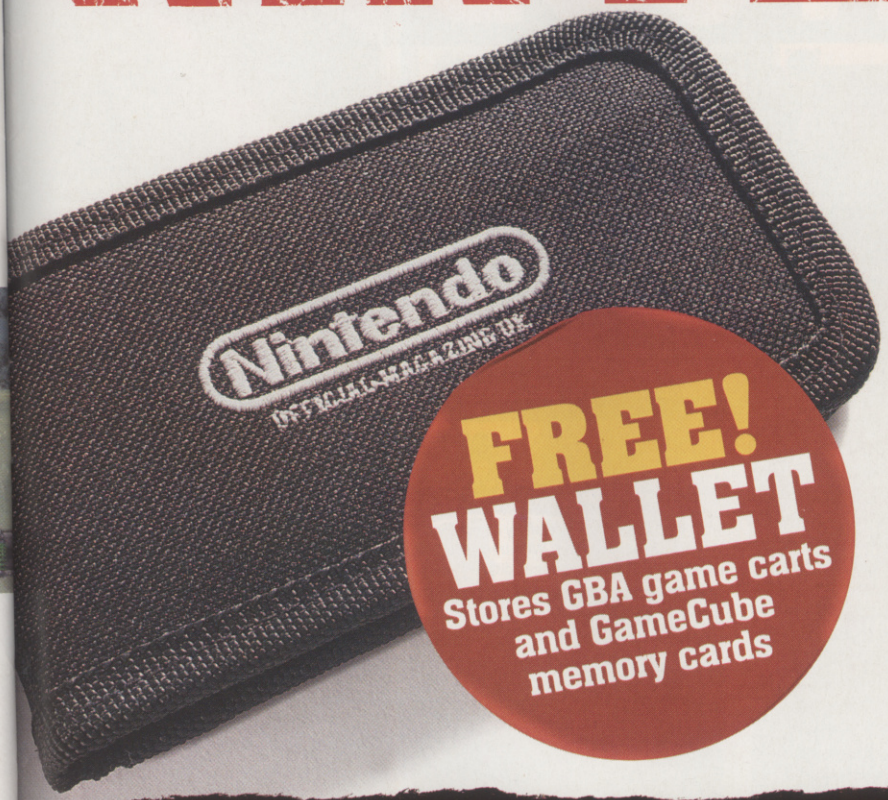

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OUT SEPTEMBER 12
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Nintendo
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

MAKE THE GRADE

Every time you successfully complete a mission in The Italian Job, your performance is graded.

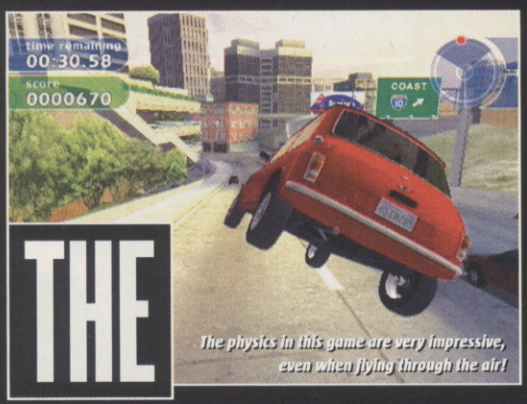
Performing stunts (such as driving on two wheels) and grabbing 'airtime' by launching off ramps rewards you with points, whilst crashing into the oncoming traffic decreases your score.

Gain an 'A' grade, and you'll unlock a new vehicle for the Free Roam, Time Trial and Circuit Racing modes.

Crashing into the traffic not only 'sparks' mass brawls, it knocks your score down too

The first-person view makes going airborne even more dizzying. Yipes!

There are plenty of ramps lying around for you to launch off into the skies



The physics in this game are very impressive, even when flying through the air!

One of the best levels involves burning rubber through the LA metro and sewers

Oops, that's blown it! Avoid crashing when carrying explosives

THE ITALIAN JOB

GAME INFO ● COST: £39.99 ● PLAYERS: 1-2 ● OUT: SEPTEMBER 12 ● PUB: EIDOS ● DEV: CLIMAX ● WWW.ITALIANJOBGAME.COM

A MINI ADVENTURE ON THE STREETS OF LA

Despite being based on the glitzy American movie sequel of the classic '60s British crime caper, Eidos's The Italian Job plays like it might have been ported from a Sega arcade machine.

It's excessively fast, intense, frantic, just a little bit kerr-azy and, more to the point, spectacularly short and repetitive. Just call it Crazy Taxi, 18-Wheeler, Daytona or something...

Who says size matters? Small cars, small game...

THAT'S A TAKE

This game's all about Minis, road-based lunacy and tearing through the streets of LA and the Hollywood Hills. Playing as criminal mastermind Charlie Croker's motley bunch of thieves, it is your quest to unlawfully reclaim a large amount of Italian gold bullion from a double-crossing conman.

To get it back requires tact, thought and cunning... actually that's a bit of a porky – getting it back essentially requires you to drive like an absolute bloody loon.

The Story mode follows the film's plot closely but it's incredibly contrived. You have to deliver explosives, zip through the LA metro network and tamper with the city's traffic lights.

But you may as well be chauffeuring the Queen through Basildon for all we care. The game's missions all boil down to reaching a destination in a strict time limit, occasionally evading pursuing cops or racing against a fellow crook. They're all swift, fleeting and packed with stunts. But it gets annoying the way individual objectives (of which there are normally two or three to each mission) have to be replayed when you fail the successive one.

MINI DRIVER

It is obvious that a talented team has been responsible for developing this.

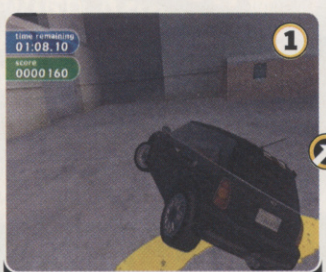
Hungry? Then why not stop off for a quick pizza...

Split-screen circuit racing is also available for two players. So you best get your mate round then...

BREAK A LEG

The 'Stunt Driving' mode allows you to truly appreciate the power of the Mini Cooper.

Here, you'll need to navigate your vehicle through a series of ramp-infested courses, racking up points by successfully completing stunts and finishing the course in an unsympathetic time limit. With immensely high scores needed for a pass, you'd better be warned – this mode is damned difficult!



Flash gits might want to spin around on two wheels to score points

Even the opening warehouse level throws up plenty of ramps for you to negotiate

YOU DOUGHNUT

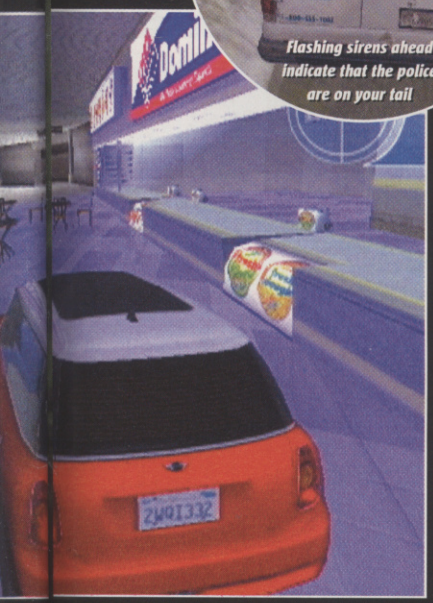
The best thing about The Italian Job is having the chance to drive the new BMW Mini Cooper, a beaut of a car.

Climax has done wonders with recreating the physics, and your speedy little vehicle has the ability to tilt on two wheels, hare around bends and perform a tyre-screeching 'doughnut' turn using the handbrake. We all want one!

The Mini Cooper is so cool that it can whizz past traffic by simply tilting itself onto two wheels. Sweet

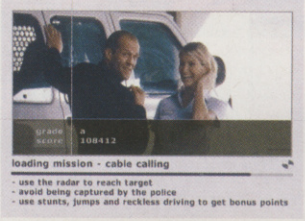
Flashing sirens ahead indicate that the police are on your tail

The Circuit Racing will leave your eyes spinning for hours on end

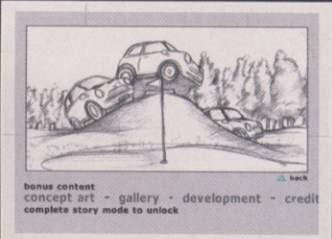


The game's not all about Minis - there are plenty of other vehicles to drive too

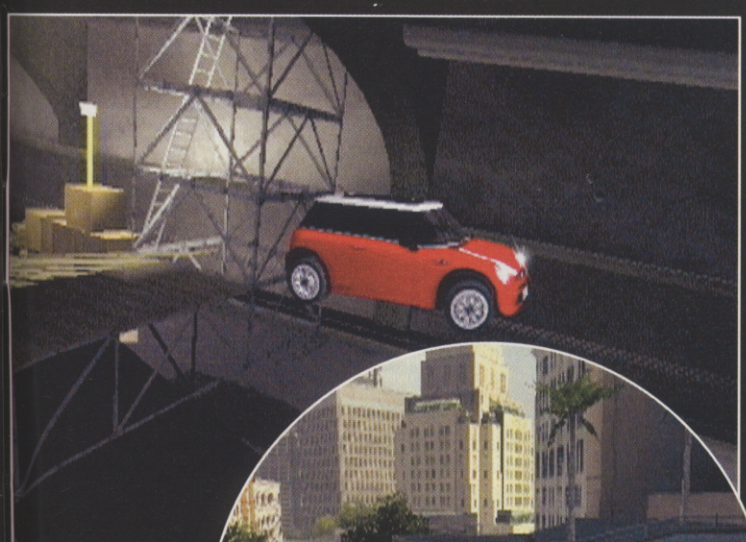
CVG's wish list: 1) Mini Cooper, 2) Charlize Theron in the passenger seat



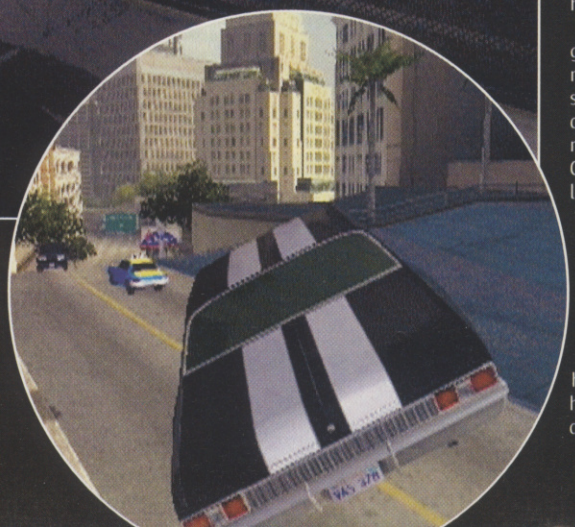
Stills from the recently remade film unfold the story in between each of the missions



Complete the Story mode for a chance to unlock lots of movie-related features



Flashy, slo-mo cutscenes show off your most spectacular jumps



Completing missions is often a case of learning the fastest route

The Italian Job is blessed with many of the essential ingredients needed to produce a satisfying street racer – eye-burning speeds (even in third-person it moves at an impressive rate), slick handling and convincing physics.

Unfortunately, the small matter of gameplay design has been somewhat neglected. The Story mode is pretty short. In fact, you should be able to complete a vast majority of its 15 missions in one evening. The Californian settings, although smart-looking, are also not as interactive as they should be, especially when you consider that the recent Midnight Club II let you crash through glass windows and fencing.

Still, at least there are several extra gaming modes for added enjoyment. The four-car Circuit Racing has manic Burnout-style racing thrills honed to a T, and the Stunt Driving courses represent a pleasing if extremely tricky attempt to cash in on the Mini Cooper's nimble mobility. You'll also get to race a variety of other vehicles too, such as sparkling saloon cars and hefty armoured trucks.

The Italian Job should satisfy the high-speed whims of casual gamers and certainly lovers of the Mini Cooper, but with little new to offer to an overcrowded genre, most hardcore speed junkies are probably best advised to 'steer' clear.

Games VERDICT

A speedy and solid street racer but the gameplay's a bit too repetitive for long-term fun. With lots of competition on the roads, a test drive rental is recommended before shelling out. **Stephen**

- ■ Incredibly fast, even in third-person
- ■ Slick vehicles and responsive handling
- ■ Lots and lots of Mini Coopers!
- ■ Repetitive gameplay and over-familiar settings
- ■ Short and shallow Story mode
- ■ Dull replay of objectives you've already finished

6 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THIS... ■ Midnight Club II (Xbox, PS2, PC)

ATV Offroad Fury 2

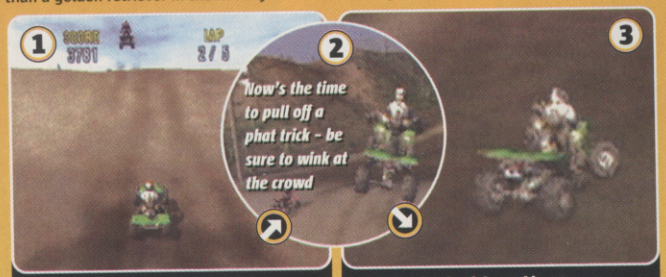
The quads are officially licensed and accurately modelled

The arrow's useful because the tracks can be hard to follow

Speed bumps are getting out of hand these days, don't you agree?

AND FOR MY NEXT TRICK...

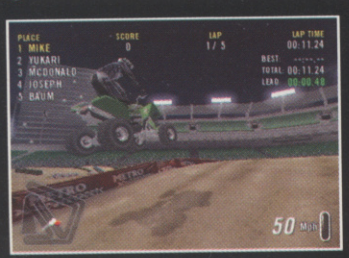
Blasting about on your quad is all well and good when you're out in a deserted field, but when you're racing in front of thousands of screaming mentalists you want to hotdog more than a golden retriever in the midday sun. Here's how you do it.



As you approach the jump, shift your weight to gain some extra height

And then land safely, making sure you don't squash your nuts on the seat

Snow doesn't make the impact any lighter - and try not to land in any yellow patches



Shift your weight at the right time or you won't be able to sit down for a month. Ouch

The words "Eat my dust" have never been applied so appropriately as here

GAME INFO | ONLINE GAMING | COST: £19.99 | PLAYERS: 1-2 | OUT: SEPTEMBER 26 | PUB: THQ | DEV: VIVENDI | WWW.RAINBOWSTUDIOS.COM

MUD ON YOUR FACE, ATV RACE, SLIDING YOUR QUAD ALL OVER THE PLACE

How cool would it be to have a quad? To be able to scurry through rutted fields, rear wheels spitting out clumps of dirt like muddy bullets, and shoot off the top of hills with the engine squealing. Then coming home caked in so much muck you look like a human jobbie.

QUAD'S THE BIG IDEA?

Driving a quad is definitely great fun and that is certainly conveyed here. It's not sophisticated, but you can leap onto your four-wheeled pocket rocket, hammer down on the accelerator and burn around straight away.

In the long term it gets a little dull racing around full-throttle, but you can't question the immediate hit of enjoyment the game gives you. It's not all just churning down straights and drifting round bends. The courses are topographical masterpieces of pits and troughs. This is where the game adds a little depth – keeping your speed up requires you to shift your weight in the air so that you land with your wheels in the right place.

Get it right and you'll be bouncing between jumps like a kangaroo on a pogo stick; get it wrong and you'll be bashing your bum-bone off the seat as you slam into an up-slope.

There are plenty of modes, each with its own championship. Progress is rewarded with profile points that can be used to unlock officially licensed quads and equipment. The multiplayer is fun too, and some of the battle modes are even reminiscent of the joy we had playing Mario Kart.

Off Road Fury 2 is short, shallow and simple. It's not trying to be sophisticated, but then nor is churning through muddy fields on a little four-wheeled motorbike.

The quad riders always stay bunched together, which makes for really busy races

He's so pleased with his performance he's jumping right out of the stadium

Check out the poseurs in the background

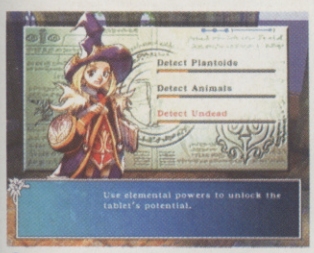
computer and video games VERDICT

So it's too easy, too short and lacks the depth, intricacy and variety of other racing games, but Off Road Fury 2 *is* a good laugh. And you get a lot of quad for your quid. **Graeme**

- Easy to handle and fun to play
- Great grinding soundtrack
- Value-packed for the price
- Basic graphics and small character models
- Lack of real variety
- Too short and too easy

7 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Smash Cars (PS2), Freestyle Metal X (PS2)



Collect spell charts to increase your special abilities with experience

Important decisions will shape your destiny but is it TOO freeform?

UNLIMITED Saga

There are some things in life that you just know are bad for you, and still you can't resist them. Like the guilty pleasure of picking your scabs and scoffing them, so too will Unlimited Saga cause you complex feelings of happiness, confusion and spirit-sapping despair.

GAME INFO

COST: £39.99 ● PLAYERS: 1 ● OUT: SEPTEMBER 12
PUB: ATARI ● DEV: SQUARE EUIX ● WWW.U-SAGA.COM

DON'T START WHAT YOU CAN'T FINISH...

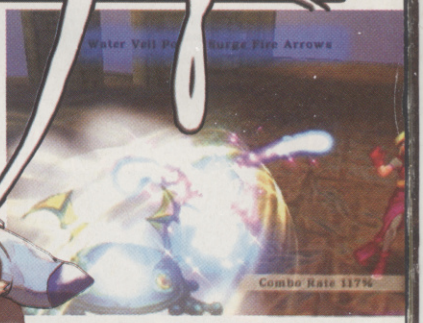
SATAN'S SCRABBLE

There's nothing in Unlimited Saga for the role-playing novice. Each of the seven heroes' stories plays differently and lasts on average 40-plus hours. The actual gameplay in each adventure varies too and pushes the limits of traditional role-playing, sometimes beyond what's tolerable (see box).

But this being a game made exclusively for role-playing maniacs, most will find they can't help but come back for more punishment. Maybe *this* time you'll crack the magic system... Just one last go at mastering your hero's growth-skills tree...

You'll think you've cracked it several times over before the game introduces yet more confusion. The result is predictable frustration, but also a guilty longing to keep chipping away at the initially impenetrable defences until it starts to make sense.

This is as niche as games can possibly get and it's likely to cause more unhappiness than joy. It's hugely polished, however – not to mention intriguing – and if you're of a role-playing persuasion, this is something of a curio piece which you might not be able to resist.



The winged toad's Water Veil move protects against fire attacks

THINGS YOU WILL LOVE TO HATE

Stop or link the reels to combine attacks, but remember that the individual icons on the reel appear in the same place, meaning you have to learn their positions!

Certain events and actions must be completed to continue the story, but they can only be accessed if you've levelled up your character correctly. Evil incarnate

Opening locked doors involves you finding the key, performing an action to pick it up then using a locksmith skill to use the key. Over-complicated much?

You're limited to moving an icon on a board rather than true exploration, and there is a set number of moves for each area. Exceed this and you will fail

Your heroes' weapons and moves level up too. This is called 'sparking' but you never actually feel in control of what your fighters learn or when they learn it

computer and video games VERDICT

A difficult one to score. It's by far the most complicated and detailed console RPG ever, but this complexity is its undoing. Original, yes, but who will stick it out to the end? **Lee**

- Pushes RPGs in an ultra-complex new direction
- Beautiful to look at, in its own unique way
- Choose your own story in seven adventures

- The most brain-popping game ever created
- No conventional action aside from battles
- No tutorials to help you through the pain

6 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Saga Frontier 2 (PSone), Final Fantasy X (PS2)

XGRA EXTREME G RACING ASSOCIATION

GAME INFO | ONLINE GAMING | COST: £39.99 | PLAYERS: 1-2 | OUT: AUGUST 22 | PUB: ACCLAIM | DEV: ACCLAIM | WWW.ACCLAIM.COM/GAMES/XGRA

BREAKING THE SOUND BARRIER AND NOT EVEN CLEANING UP THE MESS

The icons at the top are secondary weapons you can pick up

Your team will ask you to kill other racers and blow up advertising boards

Imagine the biggest nightclub you can. Fill it with hundreds of loonies twirling glow-sticks and body-popping to spine-melting basslines overlaid with crunching guitar riffs.

Next turn up the electricity so the place is blazing with enough neon to send a small nation catatonic. Then plug it directly into your brain.

That's what playing XGRA feels like. The pounding soundtrack and the scenery flashing by at mach speed produce an exhilarating sensory overload. In fact, you might want to avoid lunch because the combination of speed and twisty tracks could have you blowing serious chunks on your joypad.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

As far as futuristic racing games go, XGRA does have its merits. There are enough variations in bikes and weapons to keep you entertained and the inclusion of a Career mode, with competing teams and a developing storyline, means that it's easy to become absorbed.

The problem is that XGRA doesn't really innovate. While Wipeout had a visual style and soundtrack that tapped into the contemporary climate, XGRA feels a little stale. Nonetheless, there are still moments when you get lost in a twisty, roaring, heart-pounding trance.

Ironic, really, that a futuristic racer should feel quite dated, but XGRA still has enough supersonic fun to keep you interested. CVG

The tracks twist and turn in all directions - XGRA should come with a sickbag

The lightning tunnel was a drastic way to ease traffic congestion

Bikes and vapour trails everywhere. Nice

computer and video games VERDICT

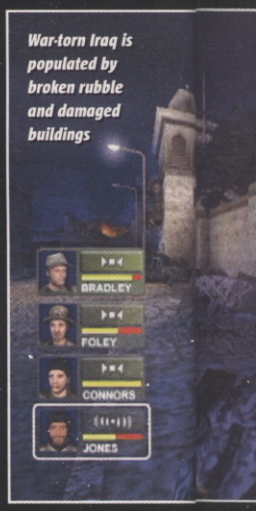
Faster than a cheetah strapped to a cruise missile, with some exhilarating arcade racing thrills. Not very original and long-term interest is questionable, but what a rush! **Graeme**

- \+ Fast, fast, *fast* and has visuals to keep up
- \+ Lot of bikes and weapons to blow them up with
- \+ Involving Career mode and storyline
- \- Repetitive finger-on-the-accelerator racing
- \- Lack of depth to keep you coming back
- \- Could give you a serious migraine

7 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Wipeout Fusion (PS2), F-Zero GX (GC)

Use the scenery to protect you against marauding tanks. Don't let them run over your foot



War-torn Iraq is populated by broken rubble and damaged buildings

CONFLICT DESERT STORM II

GAME INFO | ONLINE GAMING | COST: £39.99 | PLAYERS: 1-2 | OUT: SEPTEMBER 18 | PUB: SCI | DEV: PIVOTAL GAMES | WWW.CONFLICT.COM

IF IT'S GOT A MOUSTACHE, SHOOT IT

Rival developers must be green with envy over Pivotal's jammy timing. The cogs were spinning on the Gulf War-set sequel long before 'monkey' Bush sent his troops scurrying into Middle-Eastern territories for a second bout of Saddam-bashing.

But regardless of its topicality, Conflict Desert Storm II remains a damn fine squad shooter, which is the important bit.

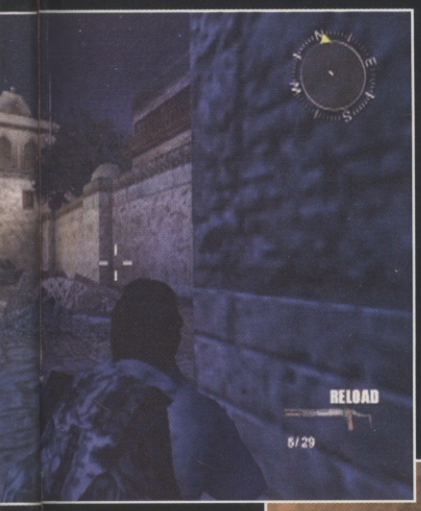
Claim a military tower and go gung-ho with a mounted gun

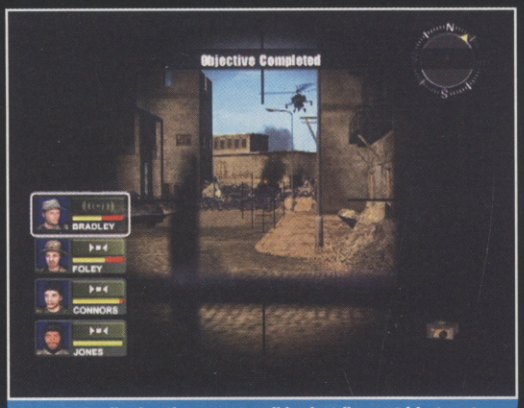
WANNA BE IN MY GANG?

You control four fully trained Allied assassins, each of whom is specialised in a particular area of modern-day warfare. Commanding them is the same as before, with the 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' adage ringing true. You can switch between team members at will, instructing fellow combatants to stand their ground, advance as a unit or surge into all-out attack.

The various commands demand careful thought, and manoeuvring your boys across hostile ground feels commendably authentic. It's not as sim-like as the Rainbow Six games, but it is deeper than EA's Freedom Fighters. There's also a cooperative two-player mode that lets you and your mate fight it out side by side.

Completing missions in style rewards your team with medals





Sergeant Bradley has the power to call in air strikes on tricky targets

NEW RECRUITS

Pivotal has produced a more complete and absorbing game by adding a wealth of new features.

As well as an improved frame-rate for graphical spods, there are new weapons and equipment to enjoy, such as white phosphorous grenades and flares. Your fighters can also roll around, peek out from behind obstacles and delay the throwing of a grenade so that it explodes exactly when you want it to.

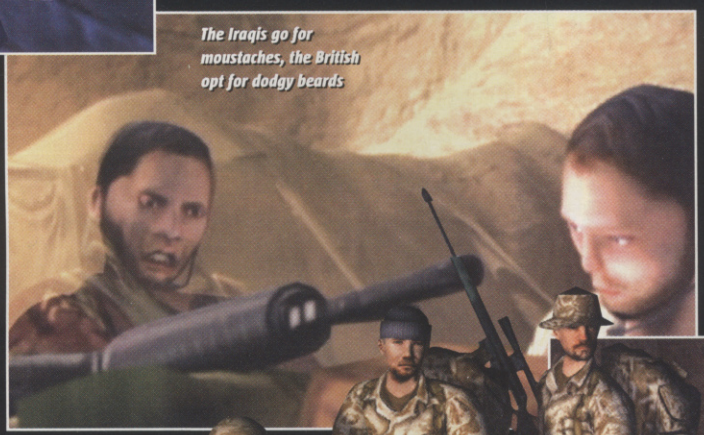
Peeking out from behind walls enables you to apply a bit more stealth

Rolling around the floor makes you a tricky target for the enemy

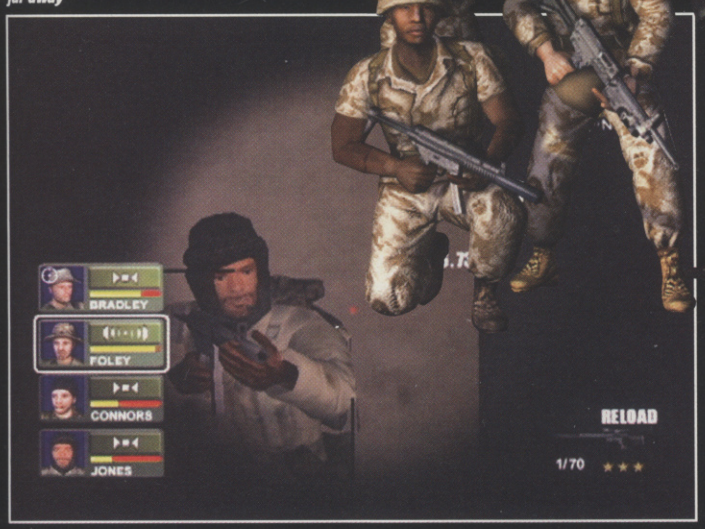
The coloured bar lets you know how long before your grenade explodes. Got a lot of precision in it, this game

II

The Iraqis go for moustaches, the British opt for dodgy beards



Sniper expert Foley is a dab hand at eliminating enemies standing far away



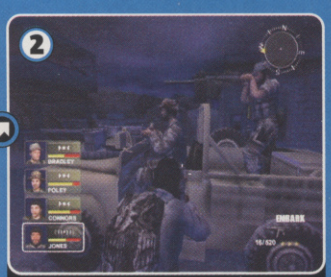
Bam! Bradley admires the impact of a well-aimed grenade. Better not stand gawping too long

I'M A LEADER!

Alternating control between each of your troops enables you to take advantage of each of their special attributes, such as sniping or heavy explosives.

You can also issue commands, advancing your troops one at a time and placing them at strategic points ahead. And with more vehicles to drive, you can assign a variety of mounted guns too. What more could you ask for?

The team advances as one, only to run into a deadly Iraqi ambush



Driving armed vehicles assigns a different role to each of your troops

Although the general mission-based gameplay differs little from its predecessor, there are still a few noticeable improvements in operation. Enemy AI is more sophisticated – soldiers don't possess a superhuman sixth sense, but their reactions are sharper and more alert. You can use stealth to creep up on them too, with bonuses awarded for eliminating foes without being spotted.

The rag-doll physics craze also rumbles on. If the jerky death sequences of Double Helix didn't satisfy, then the sickly comical sight of flying corpses in this one should. Chuck a grenade and watch with sadistic glee as the skies rain ragged bodies like confetti at a wedding.

SHORT-SIGHTED

Unfortunately, the game isn't entirely without its faults. Like Pivotal's The Great Escape, CDSII's auto-targeting lock in this is strangely more trouble than it's worth, and it's far more effective to switch to the first-person perspective during combat. The game is also relatively short, although the various difficulty levels mean that it poses a tough challenge.

Conflict Desert Storm II plays very similarly to the original. It's still the same intelligent, heart-pounding fun – with a touch more spit 'n' polish. Think of it as a diagonal step upwards rather than a giant leap forward and you won't be disappointed.

computer and video games VERDICT

Still an excellent squad-based shooter but with few improvements. If you loved the original or never got round to trying it, then you could do far worse than marching into this. **Stephen**

- Enhanced AI means it's even more exciting
- New features and weapons
- Two players can fight cooperatively

- Competitive multiplayer would have been nice
- Not the largest game in the world
- The 'auto-targeting' lock is a nightmare

8 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS, TRY THESE... SOCOM: US Navy Seals (PS2) Ghost Recon (Xbox)

COUNTER STRIKE CONDITION ZERO

GAME INFO ONLINE GAMING

COST: £24.99 ● PLAYERS: 1-32 ● OUT: AUGUST 22
PUB: VIVENDI ● DEV: RITUAL ENTERTAINMENT/VALVE SOFTWARE ● WWW.CS-CONDITIONZERO.COM

TERRORIST CELLS ARE CAUSING HAVOC AND ONLY YOU CAN STOP THEM. AGAIN

What a shame. For a year we've been wound up like an old-fashioned alarm clock, on the receiving end of tantalising morsels of information, which we've devoured like rapacious dogs.

And now it turns out Counter-Strike: Condition Zero isn't quite the game we've been led to believe it would be. We'd been expecting the single-player version of the world's favourite online shooter Counter-Strike, oozing with all-new terrorist-busting, hostage-rescuing and bomb-defusing missions for you and a team of intelligent AI bots to fight. Admittedly a lot to live up to.

SHOOTING GALLERY

In reality, it hasn't lived up to our expectations: here is a bizarre 18-mission worldwide campaign, where you're sent off on your own to riddle terrorists with holes and complete patronising puzzles, while your lazy git team-mates skulk around in safety until you've cleared a safe path for them. On the rare occasions when they do get caught up in a firefight, they're about as helpful as a squad of blind marksmen.

The action is more scripted than a soap opera, and while the enemy AI is occasionally challenging, the shootouts soon become flatter than a supermodel's chest.

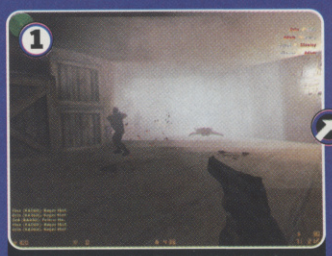
Weaponry is one area Condition Zero excels in, but ultimately, the game completely fails to reproduce the breath-sapping excitement of online Counter-Strike. Instead it offers a set of unspectacular single-player missions which rapidly become more turgid than walking through a vat of treacle in concrete boots.

The package is partly redeemed by the inclusion of the standalone version of Counter-Strike V1.6 (see box), but if you're considering buying this just for the single-player campaign, think hard. Let's just hope they make a better job of the mooted Xbox version. Judging by this, that shouldn't be difficult at all.

STRIKE ONE BOGEY

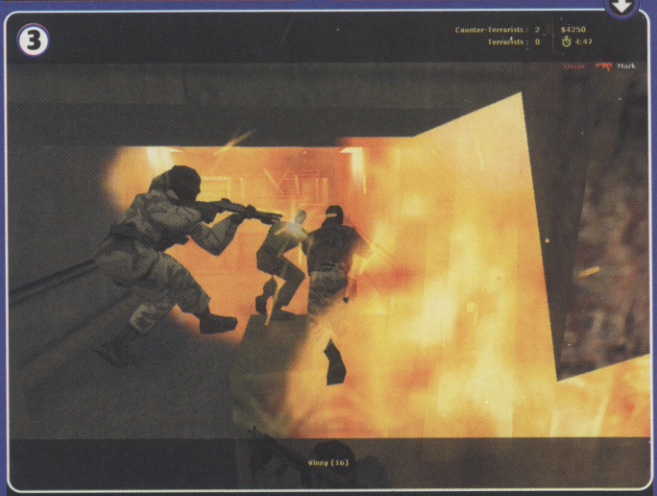
Here's the saving grace: as Condition Zero also features the standalone version of Counter-Strike V1.6, you won't need a copy of Half-Life to run it.

Unlike CZ, V1.6 features some stunningly life-like bots, who work with and against you on all of the existing Counter-Strike maps. You can even run and join servers populated by bots and humans. Blindingly bot-tastic!

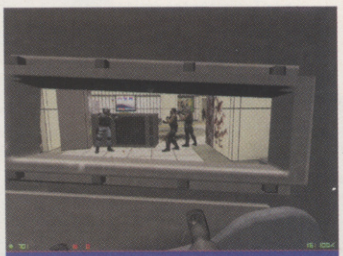


Improved particle effects make throwing a smoke bomb all the more satisfying

The bots in Counter-Strike V1.6 show a fiendish level of intelligence



The engine is looking decidedly dated now, but the gameplay is better than ever

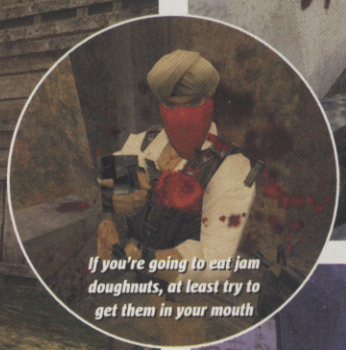


The riot shield is an essential item when you're severely outnumbered

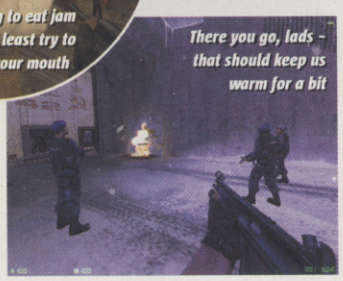
Missions take place in destinations from the Japanese metro to South American drug labs

Fighting enemies on your own soon becomes the norm, rather than the exception

Your AI team-mates are next to useless in Condition Zero's single-player campaign



If you're going to eat jam doughnuts, at least try to get them in your mouth



There you go, lads – that should keep us warm for a bit

COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAMES VERDICT

Disappointing and derivative single-player, but it's saved by the sublime Counter-Strike V1.6 bots, which makes CZ more accessible to the newcomer and more fun for the veteran. **Martin**

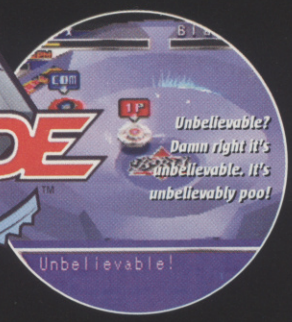
- ■ Superb bots for online Counter-Strike play
- ■ Run online servers with bots and humans
- ■ Plenty of meaty weapons to destroy enemies

- ■ Visuals suffer from clipping problems
- ■ The puzzles are so mundane it's insulting
- ■ No teamwork in single-player campaign

7 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Battlefield 1942 (PC), TimeSplitters 2 (PS2)

BEYBLADE



Unbelievable? Damn right it's unbelievable. It's unbelievably poo!

THIS LAUGHABLE EXCUSE FOR A GAME CAN GO SPIN ON IT

GAME INFO | ONLINE GAMING | ● COST: £19.99 ● PLAYERS: 1-2 ● OUT: NOW ● PUB: ATARI ● DEV: TAKARA ● WWW.BEYBLADE.COM

Unleash your Bit Beast and watch your opponent tremble with fear

STINKER CVG STINKER

The Beyblade phenomenon has spun out of the playground and onto PSone. But its digital debut will have you reaching for the razorblades. It's *that* rubbish.

Here at CVG we're easily entertained. Rubber band fights and games like 'guess how many pencils Jaime can fit in his gob' can keep us amused for hours.

But unlike these moronic sports, which involve a tiny element of skill and the help of approximately one brain cell, Beyblade requires neither.

Max works up a big one and prepares to let-rip!

You can buy upgrades for each component of your blade from the shop. Woohoo

LOOK, NO HANDS!

In head-to-head battles you decide how powerfully you want to launch your blade into the bowl. Once in the arena you can change the direction in which the blade spins and summon Bit Beasts to attack your opponent.

But that's all nonsense, because winning feels utterly random. We conducted a test, which involved leaving the controller untouched during a series of fights. The result? We won about as many as we lost!

Customising and upgrading your blades does put the odds *slightly* more in your favour, but that's no comfort because the actual physics of the spinning tops is all up the shoot. When they collide anything can happen. But that's not exciting, it's just plain irritating and mind-crushingly dull.

Let's pray that the forthcoming GC title doesn't follow the same pathetic path as this PlayStation abomination.

computer and video games VERDICT

A ridiculous excuse for a game that you wouldn't wish on your worst enemy. Unless you like being bored and annoyed, dodge this disc-o-doom at all costs. **Mike**

+ All the official Beyblade characters and blades

− Stinky graphics and animation
Stupidly random
Only two simple game modes
It's so boring it actually hurts

2 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Pokémon Ruby and Sapphire (GBA)

GROUP S CHALLENGE

The racing line bonus game is one of few original ideas

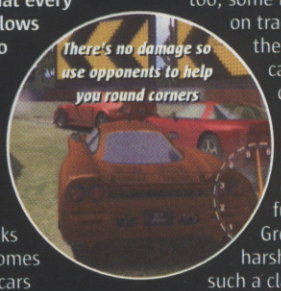
STINKER CVG STINKER

GAME INFO | ONLINE GAMING | ● COST: £39.99 ● PLAYERS: 1-2 ● OUT: AUGUST 27 ● PUB: CAPCOM ● DEV: CAPCOM ● WWW.CAPCOM.COM

CAPCOM COMMITS GRAND THEFT AUTO – AND GETS CAUGHT

The problem with a game that defines a genre is that every title that follows must refer to that benchmark. Gran Turismo has been so influential that any new racer must sidle up to it in the urinals and see how it measures up.

Group S Challenge looks the part, but it soon becomes clear that the big, shiny cars here are indeed compensating for a shortcoming in another department.



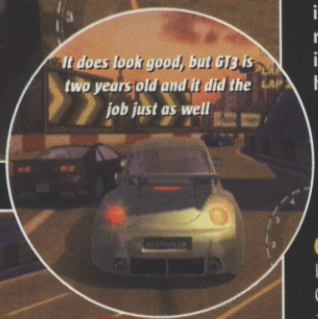
There's no damage so use opponents to help you round corners

G&T ON THE ROCKS

It's almost embarrassingly similar to GT. We've seen most of the cars before and even two of the three locations featured in GT3. The handling feels like it has been modelled on a wet sponge and never decides between arcade accessibility or realistic simulation.

The visuals should have been able to slam the brakes on Group S Challenge's slide into the crash barriers, but even they fail. There is some horrendous juddery slowdown too, some nasty jagged edges on trackside objects, and the reflections on the cars' surfaces are clearly flawed.

In fact, think of GT3, then take away all of the intricate detail and most of the fun and you have Group S. It might sound harsh to compare it with such a classic, but when a game is so blatantly similar there is no other option.



It does look good, but GT3 is two years old and it did the job just as well

Driving the real thing on real tracks MUST be more entertaining than this

At least the vehicle models look nice and solid – if not particularly exciting

computer and video games VERDICT

Armed with the power of Xbox, Capcom should have taken GT's chassis and bolted on a cool body kit and gleaming 24-inch alloys. Instead it's stripped it down to scrap metal. **Graeme**

+ Officially licensed cars from real manufacturers
Recognisable real-life locations

− Poor vehicle handling
Customisation feels pointless
Disfracting graphical glitches
We've seen it all before, and far better

4 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Gran Turismo 3 (PS2), Project Gotham Racing (Xbox)

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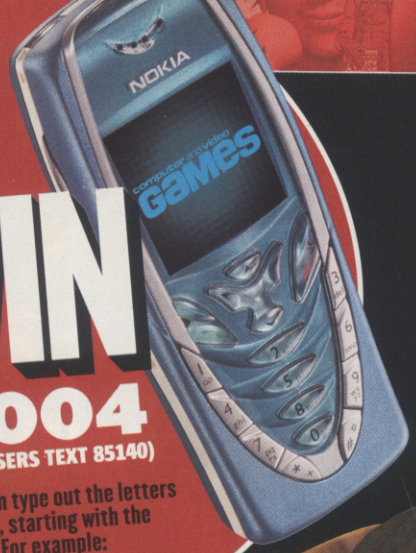

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You're good enough for that, right? No? Learn from us pros, then. You're in a small room with two bad guys who are just about to fill your body with lead. What do you do? Chuck a grenade? Bad idea! You'll take 'em down, but you'll be picking bits of your brain off the floor too. So go for the submachine gun – that baby can rip through flesh in a split second.

Got the idea? There are three situations that need your attention. What are you waiting for? Get going, soldier!

WHETHER YOU'RE PINNED DOWN IN CROSSFIRE OR HOLED UP WHILE CHOPPERS BOMBARD YOUR TROOPS WITH MISSILES, YOU GOTTA KEEP YOUR COOL. MAKE THE WRONG DECISION AND YOU'LL BE PICKING BITS OF YOUR BRAIN OFF THE FLOOR. WELL, NOT QUIET, BUT YOU WON'T WIN THIS COOL COMPO!

MISSION 1: CHOPPER ATTACK!

"Sir, we've got an incoming bogey! What the hell do we do?"

- ORDER 1: "That's not a bogey, it's a helicopter. Back to training school, fool! "
- ORDER 2: "You, with the Stinger ground-to-air missile launcher! Take that thing out NOW!"

MISSION 2: DISEMBARK!

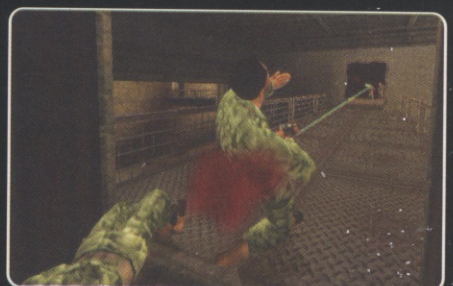
"Sir, there's too much crossfire in the drop zone. We've got to get out of the chopper in midair!"

- ORDER 1: "Well what are you waiting for – JUMP! It's not that far, you won't break both of your legs."
- ORDER 2: "Throw out a rope and abseil down, we can't afford to take any casualties through stupidity."

MISSION 3: MAN DOWN!

"Sir, it's Biggs. He's taken a bullet and he's bleeding like mad..."

- ORDER 1: "Stop pussy-footing around, get a medic over here to patch him up, and hurry!"
- ORDER 2: "Bah, that's not a wound, it's just a little graze. Leave the cry baby to it!"



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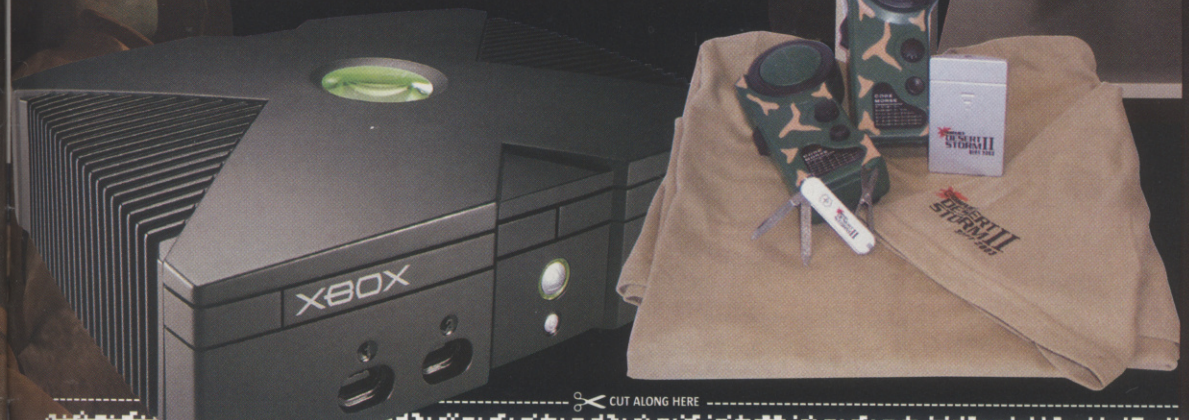

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SOURCE: Youth TGI 2002 (Autumn), © BMRB International

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computer and video GAMES

- CVG readers are 70% more likely than the average UK youth to say 'My parents buy me everything I want'*
- CVG readers are almost twice as likely as the average UK youth to agree 'It is important to have the latest equipment when playing computer games'*
- CVG readers are 70% more likely than the average youth to agree 'I am always first to try out new things'*
- 82% of CVG readers state 'I enjoy spending time on my computer'*

*SOURCE: (Independent) Youth TGI Research 2002

■ PUBLISHER
UBI SOFT
■ DEVELOPER
UBI SOFT
■ OUT: NOVEMBER 21

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

We raid the game's developers in Montreal to bring you an in-depth exclusive on this stunning, hugely innovative action title. Beat traps, slay demons and turn back time, all without getting a sandy ass-crack.

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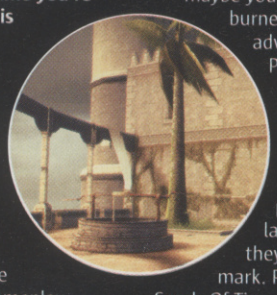
UPDATE!

PRINCE OF PERSIA
THE SANDS OF TIME

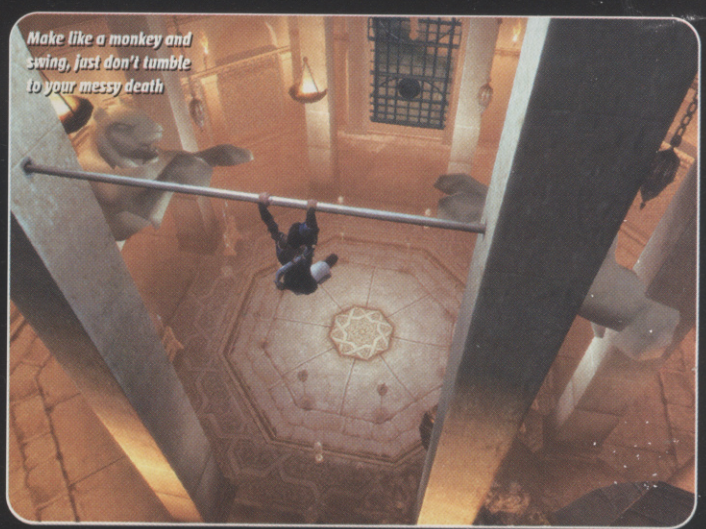
STRAP YOURSELF IN FOR THE MAGIC CARPET RIDE OF YOUR LIFE

Just one look at Splinter Cell's Sam Fisher and you know what sort of game you're going to get. The same is true of SOCOM's squaddies or Metal Gear's stealth-suited heroes. Not so with Prince Of Persia.

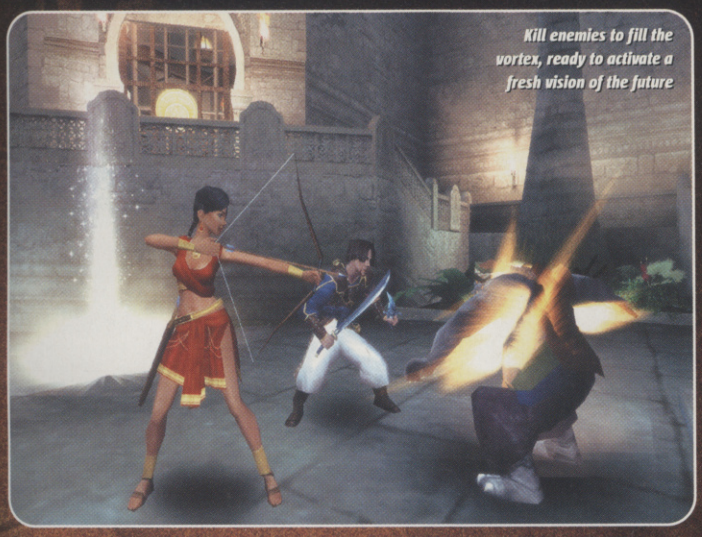
Even if you remember the classic action games upon which this latest resurrection is based, you're only going to have foggy ideas about the gameplay, perhaps likening it to a kind of Tomb Raider married with the hacking and slashing of Zelda's fight sequences. Or maybe you remember getting burned by the lacklustre adventuring in Prince Of Persia 3D a few years back and couldn't give a frig about the pantalooned Prince.



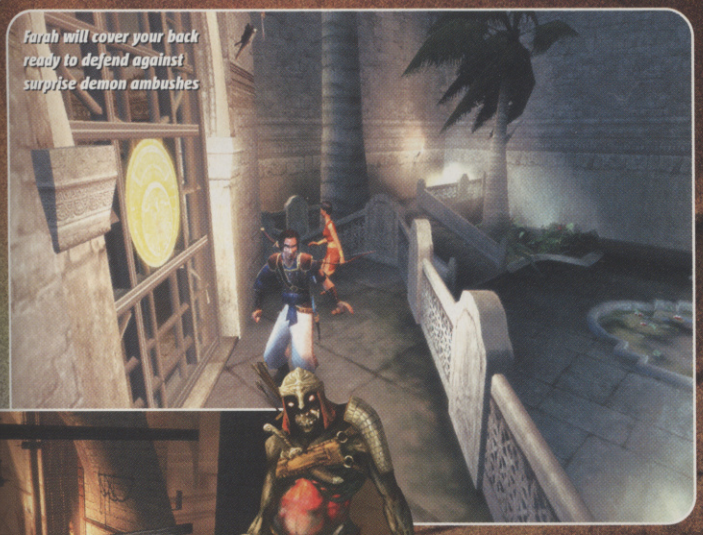
Chances are, whatever your preconceptions of the latest Prince Of Persia, they're totally wide of the mark. Prince Of Persia: The Sands Of Time is awesome and has all the hallmarks of becoming a modern



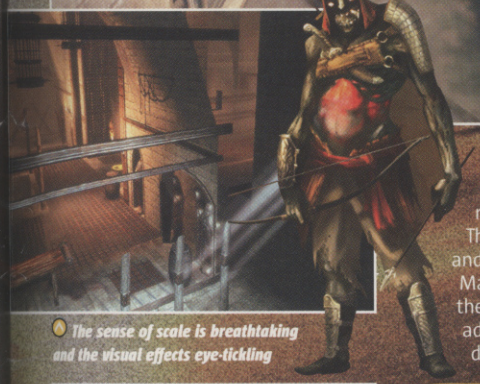
Make like a monkey and swing, just don't tumble to your messy death



Kill enemies to fill the vortex, ready to activate a fresh vision of the future



Farah will cover your back ready to defend against surprise demon ambushes



The sense of scale is breathtaking and the visual effects eye-tickling

Let there be light! It's gorgeous

gaming classic. We know this because we raided Ubi Soft's Montreal offices and got so close to this stunning action title we could feel the breeze from the Prince's capacious loon pants wafting in our faces.

MIXED GOODY BAG

It's difficult to appreciate just how special Prince Of Persia is shaping up to be just by detailing the game's individual elements. Taken separately they seem like a mishmash of ideas seen in a dozen games already on the shelves.

There's the palatial setting with tricks and traps reminiscent of Tomb Raider. The Prince is every bit as agile and stylish as Dante from Devil May Cry. The ability to control the flow of time to your advantage could have been derived from Blinx's feline DNA, and the way you must stake enemies through the heart before they'll die properly is pure Buffy The Vampire Slayer.

But what makes PoP such a promising title is the way in which these individual elements are both expanded upon and skilfully combined. Though they have an air of familiarity about them, it feels like this is the first time they've really worked together properly.

Take the wall-running move, for example. In Devil May Cry and Enter The Matrix it's little more than a novelty, used for avoiding enemy attacks and showing off to mates. In PoP it's a fundamental part of the gameplay. As floors crumble beneath you, you can execute a wall-run to avoid the danger. You can wall-run vertically and then execute a jump at the top of the run to leap from the wall and onto a lofty ledge or trapeze to continue your adventuring. You can even wall-run and launch into an unsuspecting enemy, the gameplay seamlessly switching to Fight mode as you brandish your sword and pirouette through the air before striking your foe.

CAN I GET A REWIND?!

If the Prince of Wales had just a few of the skills the Prince in this game has, we reckon there'd be far fewer people questioning the future of the monarchy.

If it's 'mad skillz' you're after from a videogames hero, PoP doesn't disappoint. What's more, combining a vast repertoire of acrobatic moves with the ability to manipulate the flow of time makes for crafty and original new ways to solve puzzles and battle demons.

Wall-running is essential for navigating the palace's defences - and it looks flash

Hold R1 to swing on trapezes or poles, then slam X to leap like a young Tony Curtis

You can slow down individual enemies when facing gangs, which is handy

These vortices of swirling sand trigger visions of the challenges yet to come

Doors are sealed with mystical symbols and you have to break the seal elsewhere to go on

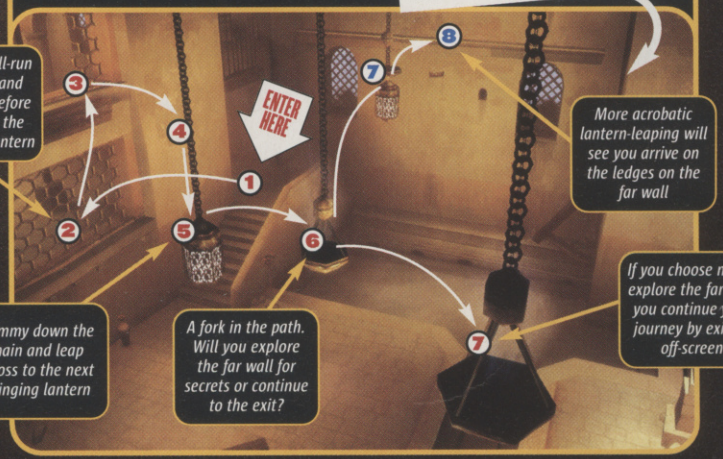
What with the Sands of Time and a full moon it's no wonder the locals are acting up

UM... A LITTLE HELP?

Each room in the game challenges the player with a perilous journey to reach its end.

Looking all around in first-person view is essential to sussing out possible routes through the danger, as is a deep understanding of how best to use the Prince's abilities.

This developer sketch shows there's more than one way to skin a cat



FEELS LIKE THE FIRST TIME

The developers at Ubi Soft Montreal maintain they had the time control idea before Blinx sprayed his faintly rank scent onto Xbox. But whoever came up with the concept first, it is taken to dizzying new heights in PoP.

By killing enemies you collect sand.

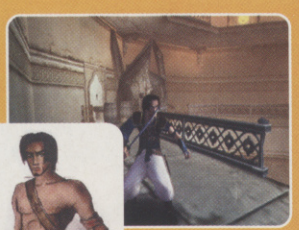
EASTERN PROMISE

The whole game is so evocative of our collective ideas of ancient Middle Eastern décor and culture that you can practically smell the incense and hear the jingle of belly dancers' anklets. Never mind the nipple tassels...

The two lead heroes carry this theme further, and seeing them explore the amazing panoramic landscapes really is like a 1001 Nights tale brought to life.

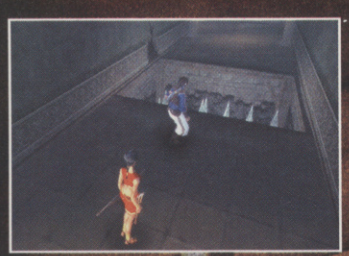
Farah is described as being 'like a gazelle' – only prettier, of course

Tattered raggedy clothing is SO last Millennium, darlink. Who does your publicity?



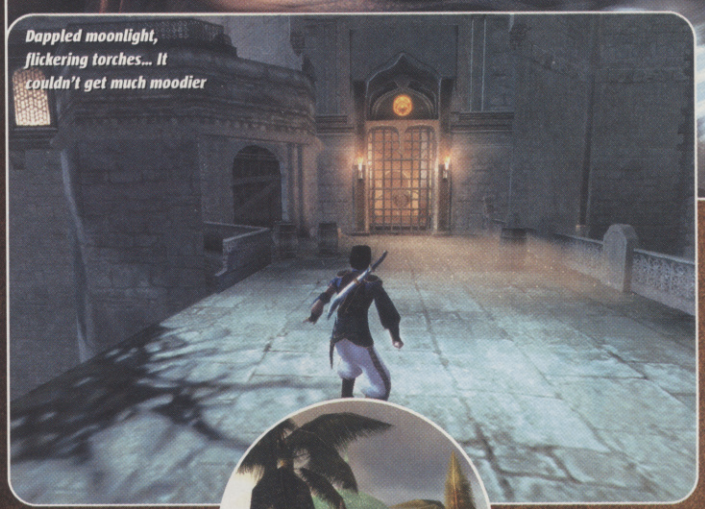
The Prince's early blazer costume is sort of formal, but he is a Royal, after all

As the adventure progresses their clothes start to fall off. True story



The Prince can wall-run past these spikes but how will Farah get across? That's your job!

Dappled moonlight, flickering torches... It couldn't get much moodier



It's like a picture from a Persian tourist brochure, minus the demons, natch

As long as you've got sand in supply you can control time, and that can come in pretty handy. It means you can rewind the game to just before you fell from that ledge or took a fatal blow in battle.

It's such a simple idea, but changes the gameplay in such a fundamental way that after playing PoP, you'll be wondering where the Rewind feature is in other games. Slowing individual enemies in battle is useful for redressing the balance when you're being swarmed by powerful foes.

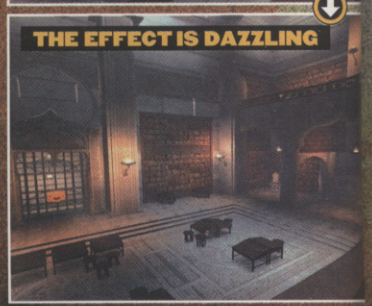
Speeding up the Prince's moves is great for taking down weaker enemies at lightning speed.

Then there's the ability to see into the future by triggering visions at certain intervals. These give you a glimpse of the dangers and challenges that lie ahead, as well as a hint of how to tackle them.

FEEL CLEVERER THAN YOU ARE

As with the original PoP games, the amazing fluidity of animation is matched by gameplay that feels like

While raiding the palace's boudoir you could check out the royal underpant drawer



Witness the wonder of all those polygons bolted together to form a realistic Arabian setting

SIFTING THE SANDS OF TIME

So just who the heck is this Prince guy anyway? And why is his return such a big deal? For the uninitiated, here's the lowdown on gaming's biggest, best and most ballsy comeback ever.

It was a balmy night in 1989. A night full of possibility. For this was the era when one man could create a videogame masterpiece in his own home.

Jordan Mechner was one such man and on this night, he put the finishing touches to his Arabian opus, Prince Of Persia.

"I wanted to recreate the excitement I felt when watching the opening sequence of Raiders Of The Lost Arc but in a computer game"
Jordan Mechner
Writer/creative consultant

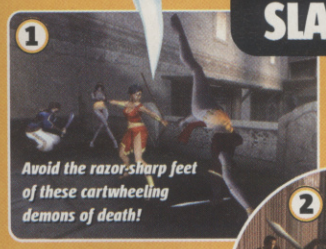
His game, about a Prince who had to escape from a well-guarded and highly trapped labyrinth within a time limit of just one hour, was an immediate success. A sequel was born in 1993 and, along with conversions to almost every home computer known to man, the two games became the stuff of legend.

The original PoP games were a triumph – the 3D update less so

As games broke the 3D barrier in the mid-Nineties the Prince was resurrected once more in an attempt to give Lara a run for her money. The game, Prince Of Persia 3D, didn't meet expectations, though, and most players came away disappointed.

For Sands Of Time, it was clear that the new development team had to create a 3D game that remained true to the 2D gameplay of the originals.

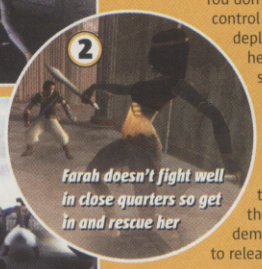
SLAYING IN THE SUN



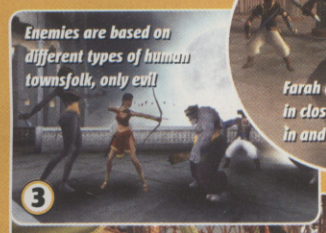
Avoid the razor-sharp feet of these cartwheeling demons of death!

In keeping with the ability to do amazing things in this game, the Prince and Farah form a devastating two-person army when they join forces in battle.

You don't have any direct control over Farah, but she will deplete enemy health using her bow and sometimes stun enemies. The Prince can use walls to launch himself into foes, or vault over them to slash them up from behind. Once downed, the Prince has to stake them through their demonic hearts, Buffy-style, to release the Sands of Time.

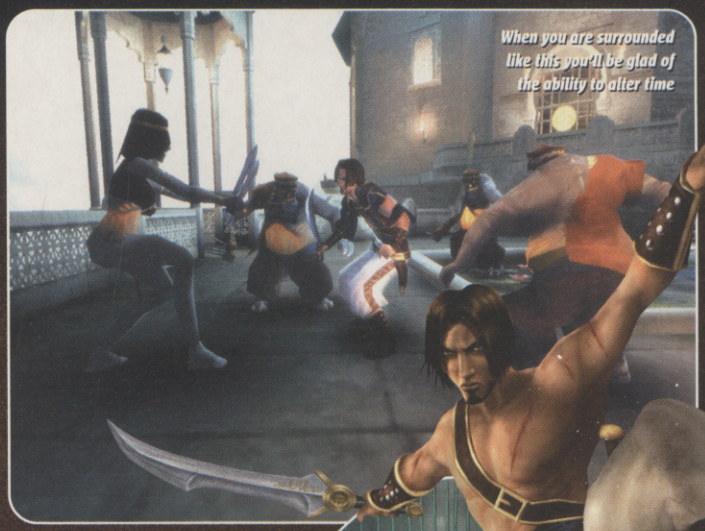


Farah doesn't fight well in close quarters so get in and rescue her



Enemies are based on different types of human townsfolk, only evil!

Sadly you can't garrotte this bad guy with his own chain. Boo!


When you are surrounded like this you'll be glad of the ability to alter time

If you see bars it's a safe bet you're going to have to swing on 'em

You have the freedom to explore on ledges or ropes

Swinging on ropes often reveals new places to leap towards

the gaming equivalent of the smoothest lager pouring down a parched throat on a hot summer's day. You can chain together combinations of acrobatic moves to rival the trapezing tomfoolery of a circus troupe. The whole thing seems to move so effortlessly that you can't help but smile and feel like a gaming genius as you play.

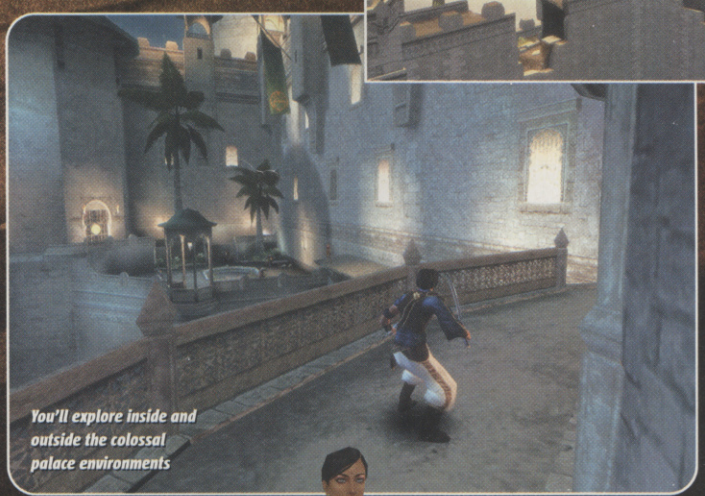
That's not to say you will succeed by rushing through each trap-filled room, though. Careful observation and risk assessment is required in any new area, and there is a great deal of trial and error in determining a safe route through. The action puzzles are perfectly balanced so that areas you once struggled to negotiate become second nature after a few tries.

The feeling of successfully pulling a wall-run/wall-leap combo onto a swinging lantern before somersaulting safely to that ledge you were sure you'd never reach is pretty amazing. It's enough to make you remember just why you loved playing games in the first place – it's that good.

FARAH AND AWAY

While you can only control the Prince in the game, once you rescue the mysterious Farah she will assist you in battle and with puzzles. A daughter of an Indian Maharaja, she's far from a compliant Stepford-like princess, and is so full of bitterness you'd think she'd been forced to eat a jar of pickled limes.

She hates the Prince for forcing her into slavery at the hands of his father, unleashing the ancient evil – The Sands of Time – upon the world, destroying her palatial home, and turning all her friends into sand demons. Talk about


You'll explore inside and outside the colossal palace environments

"Since the first two games were in 2D, it was obvious a lot of things needed to change. From the previous games we kept three main qualities in PoP SOT. The first aspect was the quality of the animations. We worked really hard to ensure a triple-A quality to all of the Prince's animations. The Prince has over 700, including 260 only dedicated to fighting.

"The second aspect is the overall quality in level design. We drastically changed the experience of PoP 1 & 2 since we eliminated the concept of levels entirely with dynamic loading. The player will feel like he's playing in one unique huge level.

"Finally, the third aspect we kept from other PoP games is the quality of the story.

"Those particular improvements were a given if we wanted to expand and be in touch with current videogame developments and reach the audience. We needed to take a step further and look deep into other innovations we could bring to the forefront. Out of this came the main feature, the Power of Rewind. The motivation was pretty obvious for us: having a main character that can do so much would mean you could do so many different things. This ability will allow the player to keep going in the game."

Patrice Desilets
Creative director

A scary amount of care and design went into the look of each palace room

LEVEL DESIGN - AND STORY

In addition to sparkly new gameplay ideas, there's a brand new character to discover. Farah is the daughter of an Indian Maharaja whose palace is attacked and conquered by the Prince's father.

"Like any good princess, Farah is proud and aloof, accustomed to privilege and a little bit spoiled. However, her true character is revealed in the face of adversity. Physically, Farah is lithe and agile, like a gazelle. Historically in medieval Persia and India, archery was one of the few sports in which women were trained to excel, and such ability was prized at court. But we never forget that she is a young princess, with a privileged background. At one point in the game, when she picks up the Prince's sword, we see that it is much too heavy for her to use one-handed, which is realistic.

A NEW PRINCESS

"The Prince Of Persia franchise has been around for quite some time. It's a game that means a lot to gamers. So when this project was given to our studio in Montreal, our goal was specific: we needed to put this game back where it belongs – at the top! And we truly believe this game has the necessary features and key elements that both new gamers and fans of the series will embrace. In terms of the Prince Of Persia series, this could be a whole new beginning..."

Yannis Mallat
Producer

THE FINAL PRODUCT

END

WALK US THROUGH IT

With so many different elements to the gameplay, it's difficult for you to imagine how they all come together. You really need to see the game in all its magnificent motion, basically...

So here's the next best thing: a walkthrough of one of the early sections. The idea is to find a way for Farah to meet you at the other side of a series of trap-filled rooms only the Prince can negotiate.

Pull the lever to unlock a door that's far off in the distance...

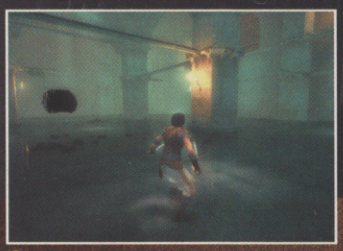
Then quickly wall-run past the spikes taking care with your timing...

...Before the door slams shut and traps you inside for eternity!

Fight the enemies in the next room using the walls to launch attacks

When all the enemies are dead, trigger the vision to see ahead

The palace reaches far up into the clouds and you need to comb every inch



Different time effects create different visual effects in the game environment

Push the blocks onto the seal pressure pads to solve the simplest of PoP's puzzles

strange bedfellows.

She's a formidable ally though and one you must protect if you are to ever escape the palace. A special amulet protects her from the Sands of Time but she is physically vulnerable to attacks from sand demons. Keep an eye on Farah's energy bar, represented by a bow on screen during fights, because if she dies, you die. The pair get split up often during the quest and it's estimated the Prince spends about half of the total game time adventuring and fighting alone.

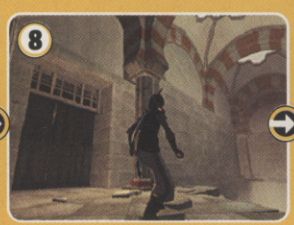
The idea is that, despite the two heroes' griping and initial hostility, your feelings will start to echo the Prince's: you'll start to miss Farah's company when playing all alone in the big bad palace and feel happy to see her again... Look what's happening – the enmity between them is breaking down, giving way to who knows what other feelings...

GET READY TO WANT IT

With its incredible technology, gameplay so streamlined the Air Force wants to have a look at its secrets, and a gripping, non-

As shown in the vision, destroy the weakened wall with your sword...

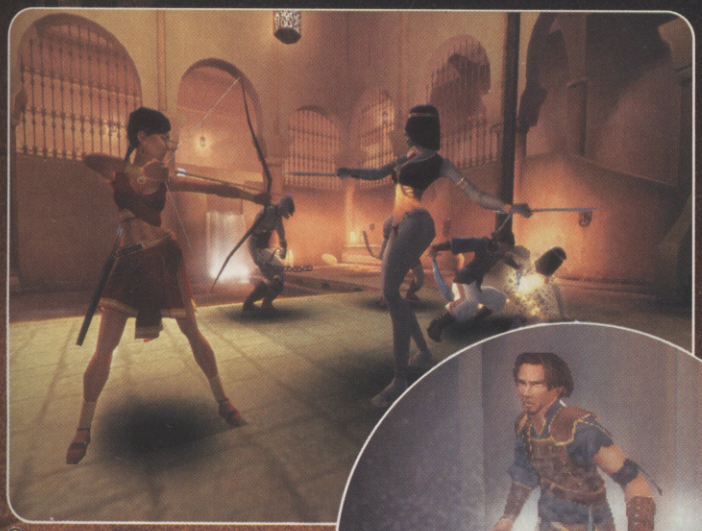
Then run up the wall and grab the trapeze until you hear it click into place



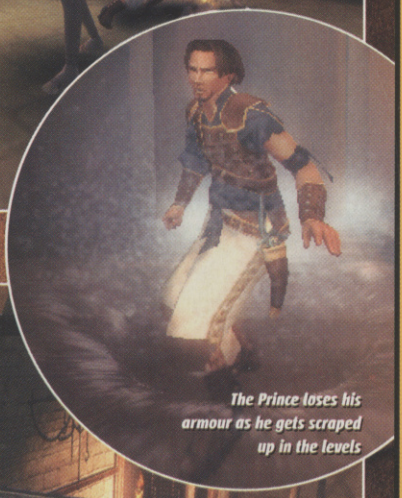
The trapeze unlocks a door in an earlier room so backtrack to find it...

...And once again find the wall to smash so that you can continue

Fight yet more d2monic enemies to the death...



It's girl versus demon girl! Our money's on the lass with the giant bow and arrows



The Prince loses his armour as he gets scraped up in the levels

So many routes through each room, which one will you try first?

The ancient palace defences are beautifully realised in the game

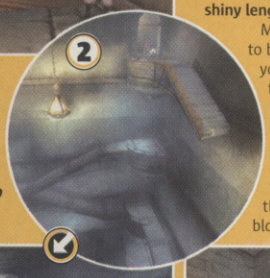
PRINCELY TRAPPINGS

The palace has been designed to feel like a living enemy itself. There are defence systems to overcome, falling walkways and an obscene number of spikes just waiting to feel the trickle of your blood along their shiny length.

Many obstacles require Farah's help to be beaten, and don't forget to use your Rewind ability if you take a fatal fall. Some of the later puzzles are downright fiendish, like the section where you have to rotate a series of cogs and gears to disarm a major trap, but the one disappointment is that there are some fairly standard block-shifting puzzles too. Cacka!

1

Execute a wall-run while avoiding the spiky wheels

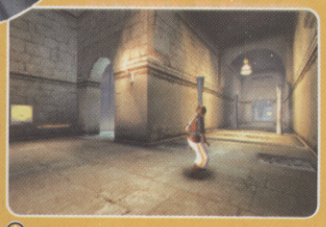


2

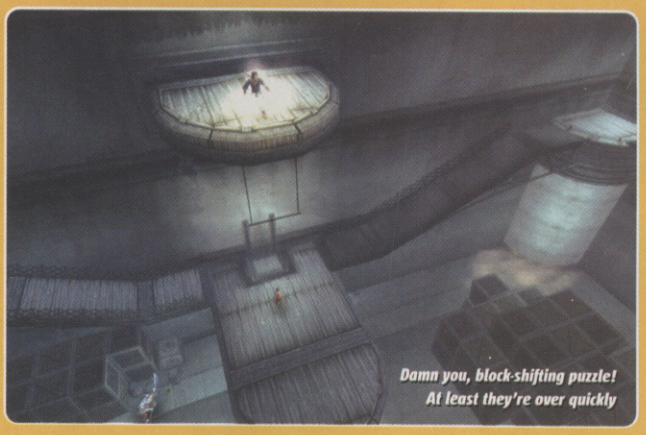
Use Farah to help turn switches to move the platform...

3

...This will form walkways through the space so that you can continue your journey



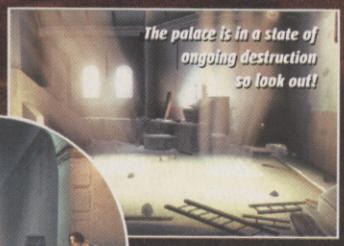
Whoever designed the palace defences has to be one sick spike-loving soldier



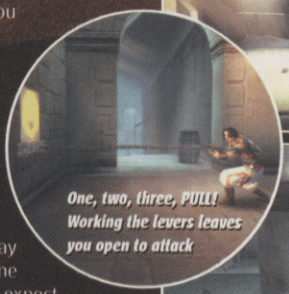
Damn you, block-shifting puzzle! At least they're over quickly

patronising and original story to play through, it's clear that this is going to be one of *the* games of 2003. What's even more amazing, though, is the feeling you get when you play.

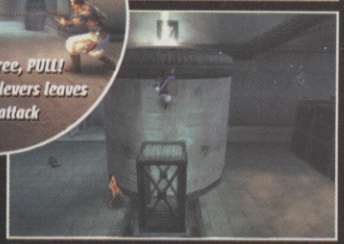
Everything in the game, from the level design to the Prince's moves and abilities, is there to reward the player. Features like wall-running and controlling time are far from being just gameplay gimmicks. And with some damn fine controls too, expect to be transported straight into the thick of the action. It's an amazing achievement and is sur[illegible]t Prince



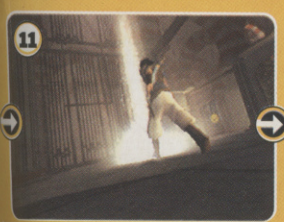
The palace is in a state of ongoing destruction so look out!



One, two, three, PULL! Working the levers leaves you open to attack



Shift the blocks to clamber up to impossible-to-reach places

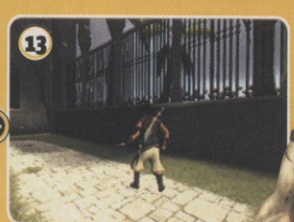


11

...And trigger the second vision of the future for one final clue about Farah

12

Pull the statue and Farah will slide through the crack, as hinted at before



13

With the Princess in tow you can make good your exit

CVG OPINION

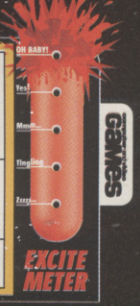
Heart-stopping adventuring that moves and plays as slick as mercury. We know this is going to be an awesome Arabian adventure; so should you. **Lee**

WE LOVE

- Gameplay is so perfectly balanced and blended
- The animations and moves are some of the best ever

WE HATE

- It's got block-shifting puzzles in it
- You have no control over Farah



Reviews

CACKMAN'S THOUGHT OF THE MONTH Notice how they took the night-time bits out of the GBA Pokémon? Unless you're playing on the original GBA, where it's always pitch black

CACKMAN©

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CACKMAN'S SHOPPING LIST

Thanks to eBay, you too can pay massively over the odds for stupid crap you didn't even realise you wanted.

Twenty-seven minutes to go! The guy that's selling it says it's R@RE! Those facts alone make a mint copy of The Wind Waker worth £56, not including postage. But that's not all Cackman wants. Here's a taster of the rest...

SAMBA DE AMIGO
For only £200 Cackman can shake some maracas with some monkeys on the television. This is better than buying a real monkey and some maracas because a) real monkeys throw crap and b) it would eat the maracas

POWER GLOVE
A glove you wear, and as you move you hand it moves the guy on the screen like a control pad. So if your Gran catches you in a compromising position, just tell her you were playing Track and Field and that your unit popped out under the strain.

AMIGA 600
The baby Amiga is now so worthless, it's cheaper to buy a few of them than a roll of toilet paper. Balance the 600 on your palm, wipe hard, and you'll find the ripple of the keyboard is highly effective. Then you can just flush it away.

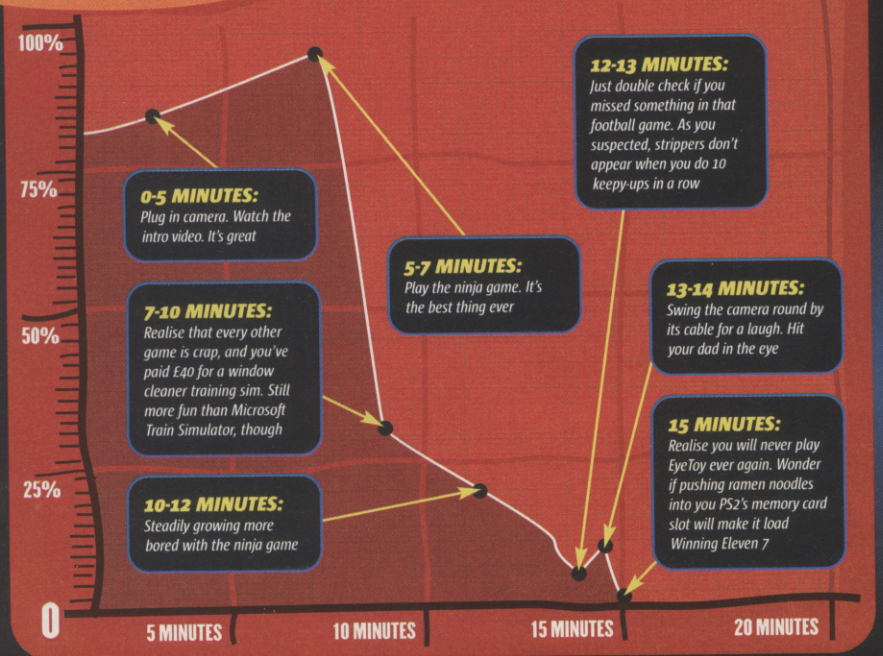
ROB THE ROBOT
It's a robot like the one in Short Circuit, which is the best film ever by the way. When Cackman buys 100 of these, their ability to stack small discs will help Cackman take over the world. The logistics of how this will work have yet to be finalised.

VIRTUAL BOY
Nintendo's failed 3D system looks brilliant on your coffee table. As an added bonus, it also gives you a brain haemorrhage if you look into it, and you go blind too. Give your mate a go, then nab his gaming gear as he takes a turn for the worse.

EYETOY

FUN GRAPH!

IT'S THE HOTTEST THING AROUND! HERE'S HOW THE PLEASURE UNFOLDS



CRACK THE CODE

Over the next few months, you're going to notice changes in your GameCube.

Its purple skin will fade to a creamy white, it'll squash down into a rectangular shape and the flip-up drive lid will get slightly broader. The word 'GameCube' then transmogrifies into 'Dreamcast'. Here's how to decode the crap...

- **"We will assess potential GameCube releases on a project to project basis"**
  ➡ The GameCube development machine makes a great ashtray at the cutting edge of design
- **"Outstanding connectivity features"**
  ➡ Paying £30 extra buys you a rubbish little map
- **"Consumers aren't sold on the whole online thing"**
  ➡ We don't want the kids to see Shigsy's illegal ape porn site, Monkey Dong Country.com
- **"Only on GameCube"**
  ➡ We made the game discs too small so they don't work in a PlayStation. Doh!
- **"We've already started working on the successor to the GameCube"**
  ➡ And if you smashed us in the face with a brick every time we said "Hello!" we'd say this: "Hello!"

WRITE TO CACKMAN

You lot must have ideas. Questions. Theories. Write to Cackman at the usual address, and the best will win an awesome prize! Senders of anything Cackman considers to be crap will be subjected to GBH in text form on this very page. Come on! You want to be famous, don't you? What else have you got to live for in your stupid little lives?

Cackman's opinions aren't necessarily those of CVG

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CHIHUAHUA - DJ Bobo	112905	SENORITA - Justin Timberlake	112732	BABY BOY - Big Brovaz	112859
IN DA CLUB - 50 Cent	112440	GOD PUT A SMILE ON... - Coldplay	112780	GET MY PARTY ON - Shaggy	112874
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LIKE GLUE - Sean Paul	112785	HOW SOON IS NOW - TATU	112746	DANCE COMMANDER - Electric Six	112876
FEEL GOOD TIME - Pink	112755	CAN'T HOLD US DOWN - Christina A	112860	PRETTY GREEN EYES - Ultra Beat	112877
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SNAKE - R Kelly feat Tigger	112687	LIFE GOT COLD - Girls Aloud	112854	NUMB - Linkin Park	112886

Yes!!! All Ringtones are Monophonic and Polyphonic*

POLYPHONICS COMPATIBILITY - NOKIA 3510, 3510I, 6610, 7210, 7650. SAMSUNG T100, N600. SHARP GX10. SONY ERICSSON T300. SAGEM MYG-5. MOTOROLA T720. PANASONIC GD87. SIEMENS C55.
RINGTONE COMPATIBILITY - NOKIA: 3210, 3310, 3330, 3410, 5210, 5510, 61XX, 62XX, 6310, 6310I, 8210, 8310, 8110I, 88XX, 7110, 7210, 7650, AND THE 9110(I). SAGEM: MC930, MC/MW932, MC936, MC/MW939, MC940, MC942, MC946, MC949 MC950, MC952, MC956 & MC959(R) MOTOROLA: T250, V50, V100, V8088 & TIMEPORT 260 SAMSUNG: T100, N600 SIEMENS: S45, SL45, C45, ME45, M50, A50, C55

WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN! WI...

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Something Beautiful - Robbie Williams	112840
4 Minute Warning - Mark Owen	112887
Funeral For A Friend - Juneau	112889
Where Is The Love - Black Eyed Peas	112890
Bringing On The Heartbreak - Mariah Carey	112895
Best Of Order - David Sneddon	112898
Dirrty - Christina Aguilera	112256
Do Me Wrong - Mel Blatt	112871
Fighter - Christina Aguilera	112649
Never Gonna Leave Your _ - D Bedingfield	112710
Cry Me A River - Justin Timberlake	112360
Hollywood - Madonna	112722
If You're Not The One - Daniel Bedingfield	112311
Year 3000 - Busted	112344
Danger High Voltage - Electric Six	112358
Sounds Of The Underground - Girls Aloud	112332
Not Gonna Get Us - TATU	112486

reggae

Get Busy - Sean Paul	112634
No Woman No Cry - Bob Marley	111331
Gimme The Light - Sean Paul	112422
Angel - Shaggy	111114

indie

I Just Don't Know What.. - White Stripes	112892
Seven Nation Army - White Stripes	112604
Last High - The Dandy Warhols	112883
Bartender And The Thief - Stereophonics	111373

urban

In Love - Lisa Maffia	112832
Mundian To Bach Ke - Panjabi MC	112342
Favourite Things - Big Brovaz	112560
Can't Get It Back - Mis-Teeq	112733
Scandalous - Mis-Teeq	112444
Jogi - Panjabi MC	112747
We Just Be Dreamin - Blazin' Squad	112721
I Luv You - Dizzee Rascal	112826
Nu Flow - Big Brovaz	112232

hip hop

21 Questions - 50 Cent feat Nate Dogg	112582
X Gonna Give It To Ya - DMX	112617
I Know What You Want - Busta Rhymes	112561
Beautiful - Snoop Dogg	112511
Lose Yourself - Eminem	112289
Act A Fool - Ludacris	112896
In Those Jeans - Ginuwine	112891
Cleaning Out My Closet - Eminem	112062
Milkshake - Kelis	112885
Forget about Dre - Dr Dre	111138
Right Thurr - Chingy	112868
Superman - Eminem	112427
8 Mile - Eminem	112376
California Love - Dr Dre and Tupac	111169
Patiently Waiting - 50 Cent feat Eminem	112598
Pump It Up - Joe Budden	112831

dance

Fly On The Wings Of Love - XTM	112705
Satisfaction - Benny Benassi	112751
Heaven - DJ Sammy	112229
Loneliness - Tomcraft	112576
Make Love - Room 5	112465
The Night - Scooter	112716
Shake Your Shimmy - Porn Kings	112463
Boys Of Summer - DJ Sammy	112387
Behind - Lacquer	112862
Keep Love Together - Soda Club	112894
Its Like That - Run DMC Vs Jason Nevins	112901
Blow By Blow - Moloko	112879
Weekend - Scooter	112466
Broken Bones - Love Inc	112632
Rhythm Is A Dancer - Snap vs CJ Stone	112485
Sunlight - DJ Sammy	112479
You're A Superstar - Love Inc	112329
Husan - Bhangra Knights Vs Husan	112586
Forever Young - Interactive	112458
Cafe Del Mar - Energy 52	111386
I'm In Heaven - Jason Nevins	112781
The Logical Song - Scooter	111965
Field Of Dreams - Flip N Fill	112608
Deepest Blue - Deepest Blue	112821
Move Your Feet - Junior Senior	112441
Nothing But You - Paul Van Dyk	112816
Sandstorm - Darude	111290

nu metal

The Anthem - Good Charlotte	112493
Faint - Linkin Park	112713
Lifestyles Of The... - Good Charlotte	112388
This Is The New Sxxx - Marilyn Manson	112878
Somewhere I Belong - Linkin Park	112442
In The End - Linkin Park	111489
She Hates Me - Puddle Of Mudd	112163
Smooth Criminal - Alien Ant Farm	111377
Freak On A Leash - Korn	111676

football

Mr Big Stuff - Soccer AM Catwalk	112559
Life Of Riley - Lightning Seeds	112880
You'll Never Walk Alone - Liverpool	111351
Match of the Day - Match of the Day	111126
Great Escape - Sheffield Wednesday	111354
Glory Glory - Man UTD*	111353
Are You Ready For Love? - Elton John	112869
Blue Is The Colour - Chelsea*	111348
Blue Moon - Man City*	111352

r n b

Never Leave You - Lumidee	112774
Breath - Blu Cantrell feat. Sean Paul	112521
Ignition - R Kelly	112588
No Letting Go - Wayne Wonder	112690
Dilemma - Nelly feat. Kelly Rowland	112221
All I Have - Jennifer Lopez feat LL Cool J	112359
Rock Wit You (Aww Baby) - Ashanti	112729
Rise And Fall - Craig David feat. Sting	112490
Mesmerize - Ja Rule	112365
Real Things - Javine	112773
Stole - Kelly Rowland	112346

rock

Bring Me To Life - Evanescence	112651
Sweet Child o Mine - Guns And Roses	111258
Bat Out Of Hell - Meatloaf	111286
Living On A Prayer - Bon Jovi	111376
Cant Stop - Red Hot Chilli Peppers	112404
Enter Sandman - Metallica	111371
Universally Speaking - Red Hot Chili...	112681
St Anger - Metallica	112789
By The Way - Red Hot Chilli Peppers	111998

themes

Only Fools And Horses	111369
Mission Impossible	111121
Rocky - Jogging Theme	112481
Axel F - Beverley Hills Cop	111601
Scooby Doo	111142
Rocky	111141
James Bond	111119
Exorcist	111871
The Terminator	111602
Star Wars - Main Theme	111125
Phoenix Nights	112364
Banana Splits	112578
Big Brother	111342
Addams Family	111849
Winnie The Pooh	111613
Muppets	111134
Sex And The City	111673
Jackass	112554
The Matrix - Rage Against The Machine	111848
Knight Rider	111127
The A Team	111115
Good Bad and the Ugly	111181

*Denotes Monophonic only!

colour pix

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250011	250014	250013	250015	250036	250043	250031	250047
251181 Jennifer	251210 Eminem	251186 Girls Aloud	251127 Ali G	251211 Ruud	251204 Becks	251152 Holly	251153 Britney

COLOUR WALLPAPER COMPATIBILITY - NOKIA: 3510i, 3650, 6100, 6610, 7210, 7250, 7650. SONY ERICSSON: T68i, T610, P800. SHARP: GX10. SAMSUNG: V200.
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142099	141594	141270	142096	141608	141002	141451	141394
141663	141670	141304	141922	141086	141242	141372	141453

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131567	131682	131562	131127
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131836	131810	131731	131478
131467	131693	131262	131576
131480	131141	131450	131477
131692	131596	131244	131156

LOGO COMPATIBILITY - NOKIA: 402, 702, 3210, 3310, 3330, 3410, 3510, 3510i, 5110, 5130, 5146, 5210, 5510, 6110, 6130, 6150, 6210, 6250, 6310, 6310i, 7110, 7210, 7650, 8810, 8210, 8310, 8810, 8850, 8890, AND 9110(i) ERICSSON: T20E, R520M SAMSUNG: T100, N600 SONY ERICSSON: T68, T68i SIEMENS: S45, SL45, C45, ME45, M50, A50, C55

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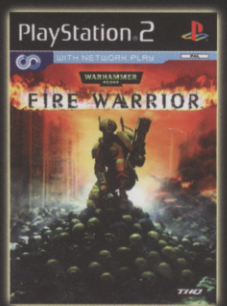

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